ESSAYS

AND

DISSERTATIONS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS,

RELATING TO

HUMAN LIFE AND HAPPINESS.

In Two Volumes.

VOL. I.

Εν τῷ γράφειν ϗ ἀναγινώσκειν, ἃ πρότερον ἄρχθεις πρὶν ἀρχθῆς, τῦτο πολλῷ μάλλον ἐν τῷ βίῳ. M. Antoninus.

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IT will be eaſy to ſee, from the *preceeding* TABLE of CONTENTS, that any fault, with which the following *Tracts* may be chargeable, lies not in the choice of the *Subjects*, which are the moſt important and intereſting that can engage the attention of mankind: The *Author* thought ſo as to himſelf, and committed his thoughts on moſt of them to writing, at different times, chiefly for his own *private* benefit, in the way of preciſion and eſtabliſhment as to theſe points. Long confinement by bodily indiſpoſition, having put it out of his power to be of that uſefulneſs, he would wiſh, to others in a more *active* ſphere of life, he deſires to make up, in ſome meaſure, for this, by communicating to them his more retired exerciſes in a literary and *contemplative* way, or whatever he has found moſt for his own ſatisfaction and improvement; in like manner as a phyſician of humanity would not wiſh to leave the world, without making, whatever he has found moſt conducive to his own health and that of others, as generally

rally known as poſſible: in the preſent caſe, indeed, the Author ventures on this with ſome diffidence, not of his *concluſions*, but of his own *abilities*, in the way of doing that juſtice he would wiſh to the different ſubjects treated of; but this, he hopes, will not be judged of from a *ſhort*, *curſory* peruſal of what he has endeavoured to make worthy of more *careful attention*: The ESSAYS indeed (which makes but a *fifth part* of the following work,) were wrote ſometimes in a hurry, (asweekly publications often are,) a few years ago, nor have they ſince been altered: But in the DISSERTATIONS, (none of which was ever publiſhed before,) he has endeavoured to bring what ismoſt important, in a ſpeculative as well as pracical view, with reſpect to the different ſubjects treated of, into as narrow a compaſs as is conſiſtent with perſpicuity and accuracy; and to carry his inquiries (as much as poſſible,) into the *real nature* of the things themſelves, according to the light in which they appeared to him, without enlarging on ſuch particulars

culars as had (to his knowledge) been fully and diſtinctly treated of, in the ſame way, by others, to whom he refers. After all, however, it muſt be owned, that, let the labour and hopes of a *Writer* be what they will, the *attention* commonly *claimed* by him muſt be given, before it can be known how far his *claim* to it is well founded.

Whatever information is neceſſary, with reſpect to the *occaſion* and *deſign* of the following ESSAYS in particular, ſhall be taken notice of in the *Notes*.

The CONTENTS of VOL. I.

ESSAYS. *Pages.*

I. *Occaſion* and *Deſign* of the ESSAYS, with Thoughts on GRATITUDE, particularly as it has reſpect to GOD. 1--6

II. The *ſame* Subject continued, 7-13

III. A view of HUMAN LIFE, 14-20

IV. The *ſame* continued, 21-27

V. The *Juriſdiction* of TIME. An Allegory, 27-33

VI. The *ſame* continued, 34-41

VII. On *Patriotic*, *Political*, and *Humorous* Writing, 41-48

VIII. On LIBERTY, its Value, Origin, and Progreſs, 49-58

IX. ——— its Nature, Reſtraints, and *Influence*, 59-67

X. —— —— Its further *Influence*, and its *Corruptions*, 68-78

XI. *Libertiniſm* deſcribed; with the Hiſtory of JACK FREEMAN, 79-89

XII. The *Art* of TEACHING---*Literary* and *Familiar*---with an Example of it in SOPHRONIUS, 90-100

XIII. On the LOVE of VARIETY---Its *Prevalence*, *Uſe*, and *Abuſe*, 100-109

XIV. On the *Variety* of HUMAN CHARACTERS, 110-119

XV. A Letter from Lord *B-l-ng---ke*, to Meſſrs *V--t--e*, *H----e*, and *R--ſſ--au*, 120-139

Diſſertations.

I. On CONSCIENCE: Its *Nature*, *Office*, and *Relation*, to the other Powers of the Mind, par-

Dissertations. *Pages.*

ticularly *Reason*, and a *Moral Sense*, with the *Qualities* of *Actions* determining it, and the different *Questions* that arise with respect to it, considered both philosophically and practically, 140-193

II. On EXPERIENCE: Its Nature, Effects, Operation, and Importance, as to the different Branches of *Human Improvement*; the manner of *conducting* it with a View to this, and some *Questions*, *Canons*, and *Maxims* respecting it, 194-227

III. On PROVIDENCE, in two Parts,

1. The *Arguments* in proof of it, and *Import* of our *Belief* with respect to it, 228-256

2. The *Objections* against it----From Man's free Agency----From its superseding the Use of Means---From the Dignity of the Supreme Governor---From the fortuitous appearance of Things; and from the present seeming promiscuous distribution of Happiness, 257 *ad fin.*

CON-

The CONTENTS of Vol. II.

Dissertations. *Pages.*

IV. On HAPPINESS, in three *Parts*, or *Inquiries*, viz.

1. Man's *true Happiness ascertained*, from an Estimate and Comparison of his various Enjoyments, 1-18

2. The *plain way* of *attaining* that which appears to be Man's *true* and *ultimate* HAPPINESS, 19-53

3. Means of *forming the Temper* for Happiness, and avoiding those *occasional disquietudes* by which it is often impaired or interrupted, 54-64

To this are added,

MISCELLANEOUS Observations and Directions respecting the *comfortable* and *consistent* Conduct of Life, with practical *Conclusions* and *Resolutions* in relation to it, 64-105

V. On DESIRE, in two *Parts*,

1. The *Origin* of DESIRE and the *Affections* most nearly allied to it, 106-123

2. The proper *Regulation* and *Management* of these in order to *Happiness*, 124-139

VI. On *Action*, *Contemplation*, and *Disengagement* from the World, 140-177

VII. On EDUCATION, considered as it has respect to the different *Periods* of *Infancy*, *Childhood*, and *Youth*, and to different *Habits*, *Exercises*, and *Studies*, 178-258

VIII. On

Dissertations. *Pages.*

VIII. On DEATH, considered as to its *Origin*, its *Nature*, and its *Effects*, in a *physical* as well as in a *moral* or *religious* light, 259-287

IX. On IMMORTALITY, in five *Parts* or *Inquiries*, respecting

1. The *Nature* of the SOUL, its *powers* and *place* in the general scale of Beings, 288-309
2. The Evidences of its *surviving Death*, and Objections against it, 309-316
3. Its Condition while *separated from the* BODY, and the different Opinions with respect to it, 316-327
4. The *Re-union* of SOUL and BODY, with the Arguments for and against it, 327-334
5. The *Consequences* of this *Re-union* largely considered, in respect of the General Judgment----The Millennium----Future Sufferings and Enjoyments, their Nature and Duration, 334 *ad fin.*

ESSAYS

ESSAYS

ON

VARIOUS SUBJECTS.

ESSAY I.

Occaſion and Deſign of the ESSAYS, with Thoughts on GRATITUDE, particularly as it has reſpect to GOD.

Thurſday, Jan. 2. 1766.

——*Olim hæc meminiſſe juvabit.* VIRG.
Theſe to remember, may long hence avail.

ZEAL for the ſervice of the public has, in theſe patriotic times, ſo increaſed the number of periodical Writers, that the whole catalogue of Titles ſeems to be almoſt exhauſted; and it is hard to ſay whether the obtaining a proper office, or a name to diſtinguiſh it, be moſt difficult. The venerable names of *Spectator*, *Guardian*, and *Rambler*, are now no more; "along

" the ſtream of time they flow expanded—
" and gather all their fame." We have ſince, however, had our Schemers, our Monitors, Auditors, and Cenſors; and even an humble canditate for fame, by the name of Trifler; but without preſuming to leſſen their merit, there ſeems to be one Province as yet unoccupied, the command of which may be diſtinguiſhed by the name, ſtile, and title, of *Remembrancer* *.

THE commencement of a new period, which has given riſe to ſo many annual Regiſters, Kalendars, and Journals, for the benefit of commercial life, ſeems to call for ſomething ſimilar in a ſocial and moral view; ſome office-bearer analogous to what was

* The occaſion of this Introduction, and of ſome references afterwards to the title of REMEMBRANCER, was, that the following Eſſays were firſt publiſhed under that name, weekly in *Bath*, for ſome months of the year 1766, and the Author's honour pledged to ſeveral reſpectable Gentlemen there, for collecting and republiſhing them with ſome additional tracts, as ſoon as he conveniently could, but his removal from that place to a conſiderable diſtance from any preſs, occaſioned his delaying this till now, and digeſting his thoughts on ſome other intereſting ſubjects in his view, in the form of Diſſertations, which make by far the greateſt part of the following work, and were never before publiſhed.

was inſtituted by an antient eaſtern Monarch, for reminding him that he was mortal; let this then be conſidered as the chief, but not the only province of the *Remembrancer*; whatever ſubject appears to be of particular importance in the view above mentioned, yet in danger of being overlook'd or forgotten, amidſt the diſſipation of pleaſure, the debility of idleneſs, or the hurry and noiſe of tumultuous life: To this it is his buſineſs to engage the attention of his countrymen, without exception of any ſubject but what is either mechanical or political; theſe he leaves to other Managers, whoſe number and talents are ſuch, as that they need none of his aſſiſtance; there being no occaſion for being reminded of any thing that does not ſeem to be in danger of being forgot. For the ſame reaſon it may be expected that what is ſerious ſhall always have a preference to what is humorous, in the labours of the *Remembrancer*; tho' the latter cannot be entirely excluded, without Prejudice to the former.

As beginning the year with advantage is the occaſion of his labours, there is no ſuch proſpect of their being long continued, as can make any thing that relates to himſelf perſonally a matter of importance to the public, his buſineſs and endeavour ſhould be to turn their attention to his

ſubject, and not to himſelf; ſo that his name and family, with the form of his perſon, and length or ſhortneſs of his viſage, ſhall, in regard chiefly to his own eaſe, continue equally unknown; tho', in any other reſpect, he has nothing to hope nor to fear from the diſcovery; and by reducing his weekly admonitions to very narrow limits, he hopes to prevent their becoming burdenſome to himſelf or to others.

In conformity, however, to the motto he has choſen for this introductory eſſay, it will be neceſſary for him to lengthen it ſo far as not to diſmiſs his readers till he has reminded them of ſomething which they ſhall afterwards be the better of having remembered; and, among the variety of ſubjects that occur, there is none by which they may find in the iſſue more pleaſure and advantage, or which ſeems to be more ſuitable to a ſeaſon of general gaiety and gladneſs, as well as to a place where ſo many have had diſtinguiſhing proofs of the divine goodneſs, than to reflect a little on the many grounds of gratitude we have to that beneficent Being from whom all being and happineſs are derived; and who, as he is infinitely happy and perfect in himſelf, has made us in ſome meaſure capable of ſharing his happineſs and perfection. When one year, therefore, is paſt away, and another

in

in the order of nature ſucceeds it, can any thing be more natural and dutiful for us than to beſtow ſome part of our time in reviewing both the more general and particular diſplays of his goodneſs to us in our ſeveral different ſituations of life? more eſpecially where we have not only the bleſſing of health to acknowledge, but likeways the continuance or recovery of health ſo neceſſary to the enjoyment of it. That inattention and giddineſs of thought, which is too prevalent in every one of us, makes it indeed highly neceſſary for us to lay hold of every favourable opportunity of exciting a due attention to the bleſſings of heaven, and grateful adoration of the Moſt High: And theſe are ſentiments and impreſſions which we cannot be at too much pains to cultivate, if the happineſs and perfection of our own ſouls be any part of our ſtudy, for a lively and grateful ſenſe of the divine favours diffuſes unſpeakable happineſs over the mind, and contributes highly to its improvement into a juſt regard and conformity to the Divine Will, as it is impoſſible for us to be ſincerely thankful either to God or man, without endeavouring to pleaſe or gratify him to whom we are thankful, and to whom we reckon ourſelves indebted; whereas an ungrateful heart is, in all caſes, and, by all perſons,

very juſtly condemned, as arguing a heart very much depraved, and very deſtitute of every other good impreſſion.

Let us then recall to our thoughts ſome of thoſe invaluable bleſſings which the good hand of our God has beſtowed, and continues liberally to beſtow upon us, and which we are bound always thankfully to remember and acknowledge: But what tongue can tell the number of his benefits? Fancy itſelf is loſt in the unmeaſurable proſpect; the being and comforts we enjoy at preſent are from him; the capacities and hopes we have of higher enjoyment and perfection hereafter, are likewiſe from him; every mean of ſupporting and refreſhing the body, every mean of informing and improving the ſoul, is the gift, the free and unmerited gift of our beneficent Creator; earth, ſea and air, proclaim his goodneſs; every ſeaſon, every region of nature, abounds with the tendereſt inſtances of his affection for the ſons of men.

ESSAY

ESSAY II.

The ſame Subject continued.

Thurſday, Jan. 9. 1766.

——*A* grateful *Mind*
By owing owes not, and ſtill pays;
At once indebted and diſcharg'd.

MILTON.

TO undertake no more than we are fully aſſured of our ability to execute, is a precaution very uſeful for preventing diſquietude to ourſelves, and diſappointment to others; but had this precaution been always ſtrictly obſerved, it is very probable, that many ſchemes of public as well as private utility, would either have periſhed in their conception, or languiſhed in their progreſs.

It muſt therefore be admitted, that tho' a laudable deſign will not juſtify the uſe of unwarrantable means, yet it may excuſe our putting ſomething to hazard, in the execution.

Here lies the province of *Enterprize*, it aims at ſomething uſeful and important, it proceeds with ſkill and ſteadineſs; but in the proſpect of ſucceſs, and proportion between the abilities and the attempt, there muſt be ſo much of uncertainty and hazard,

as leaves room for a diſplay of dexterity and reſolution.

It may, however, be a prudent maxim for the *Trader* not to launch *too far* beyond his capital; for the *Builder* not to begin his work till the materials are all either collected or ſecured; and even for the *Literary Adventurer* to undertake no more than he has either materials or reſources for accompliſhing: But to the laſt of theſe caſes the maxim is extended with ſome diſadvantage. The *Syſtematic Writer* may indeed have both the ſtock of ideas neceſſary, and ſome arrangement of them, before he commences his undertaking; but the *occaſional* and *periodical* Writer cannot be ſo provident; he knows not what materials and implements his work may require, and muſt therefore have the larger reſources, with a facility of humour and invention for accommodating them to particular and unforeſeen emergencies: Hence it is that every writer of this claſs chuſes to enlarge his ſphere of *Enterprize*, that by having it in his power to diverſify his ſubjects, he may have ſome compenſation for their coming upon him unprepared; even as a Gladiator would chuſe to have the choice of his field for diſplaying his agility, rather than be kept at bay in a ſingle corner.

Satisfied

Satisfied, therefore, as to the reaſonableneſs of his plan, and rectitude of his intention, the *Remembrancer* proceeds, not with magiſterial airs to inform his readers of any thing they knew not before, but to remind them of what they know; and if, as ſome have maintained, all knowledge is but reminiſcence of what was learned in a præexiſtent ſtate, he has the advantage of as large a field for diſplaying his abilities, as any of his predeceſſors in office, but always with an exception of the ſubjects excluded in his introductory eſſay, as being either too far above or below his notice. He alſo flatters himſelf that the office he has choſen in the republic of letters, is ſuch as will create no prejudice againſt himſelf or his admonitions. He pretends not to be any man's rival or ſuperior in point of *Judgment*; *Memory* is the province he lays claim to, and which will be more eaſily yielded to him than the other; but for the ſatisfaction of ſuch as will not even condeſcend to this, he hereby declares his willingneſs to receive any information or ſuggeſtions from them, reſerving to himſelf the liberty of communicating them or not, according as they appear to ſuit his general plan, which it was neceſſary for him thus to unfold a little more in his ſecond eſſay: But he is unwilling to be detained any longer by this general explanation

explanation of it, from proſecuting the ſubject entered upon in his laſt, and which the *Motto* he has this day borrowed from an eminent Engliſh claſſic, will probably bring to view.

The importance, and preſent ſuitableneſs of this ſubject, do indeed make ſome further conſideration of it neceſſary; but its extent is ſuch as that no great exerciſe either of memory or invention would be requiſite to enlarge on it much more than the bounds now preſcribed will permit us to do on any one ſubject of whatever importance; for though *Gratitude* to GOD, and to man, be a very pleaſant and powerful motive to duty, yet it is not the only one, nor the only ſubject of which we have need to be reminded.

What makes it neceſſary to take notice of this is, that ſome, for want of conſidering any other relation in which we ſtand to the *Supreme Being*, than as creatures of his Bounty, would have the whole of the regard due to him to conſiſt in *Gratitude*, and the expreſſions of it in the way of thankfulneſs and praiſe.

The celebrated *Voltaire*, *Rouſſeau*, and ſome of their admirers, may value themſelves for their refined ſentiments on this head, as exalting devotion by abridging it; but by our inſpired writings, as well as by experience,

experience, we are taught to conſider ourſelves not only as creatures highly diſtinguiſhed by the divine favour, but likewiſe as *indigent*, *ſinful*, and *dependent* creatures, to whom other exerciſes of devotion are neceſſary as well as *Gratitude*; though this indeed (even in the view of our being *ſinners* and of the *Chriſtian* grounds of *Gratitude* thereupon,) ſhould always have the preeminence; for if any religious exerciſe, if any branch of devotion elevates the ſoul beyond itſelf, and plants there the image of heaven, it is the exerciſe of ſincere unfeigned *Gratitude* to GOD, or thoſe devout and affectionate overflowings of ſoul towards him, which naturally ariſe from the ſerious contemplation of his goodneſs, as diſplayed to all of us in common, and each in particular.

That the mere enjoyment of being, or even of animal life, alone, challenges returns of gratitude, cannot well be affirmed, becauſe a creature endowed with no higher powers is not capable of the exerciſe of gratitude; nor ſhall I affirm that an intellectual or thinking being, tho' full of pain, is much better than to have no being at all*; but

*——For who would loſe,
Tho' full of Pain, this intellectual Being,
Theſe Thoughts that wander through Eternity,
To periſh rather, ſwallow'd up and loſt
In the wide Womb of uncreated Night.

MILTON.

but this I can, with aſſurance of the truth of it, affirm, that there is not in the whole of God's works any one creature capable of gratitude to him, who has not likewiſe had cauſe of gratitude; as there is not in the whole of his works any one creature capable of happineſs, to whom he did not originally afford the means of happineſs; that theſe means of happineſs may by ſome be miſimproved and forfeited, is but too conſiſtent with ſcripture and experience; that the happineſs of others may be interrupted for a time, according to the natural courſe of things in this world, and yet be again recovered and acknowledged with gratitude, is alſo agreeable to experience and revelation; but for any man or any being to be created, capable of happineſs and capable of gratitude, without ſufficient grounds for theſe, either in themſelves, or as they tend, upon the whole, to beautify and glorify the divine adminiſtration, is what can never, with any reaſon, be imagined or evinced.

Is it then a ſmall thing for us, thus to have had the means of rational happineſs, and the capacities of gratitude afforded us? Is it a ſmall thing for us, to have been made capable of taſting the pleaſures of true devotion, of contemplating the beauty of the divine works and ways, and keeping up a religious intercourſe with our Maker? To

ſuch

ſuch as have debaſed their minds by immoderate gratifications of ſenſe and appetite, it may indeed ſeem a ſmall thing to have a ſoul capable of higher enjoyments; while it is only with ſenſual pleaſures they are acquainted, they know not what thoſe purer joys mean: But to ſuch as have their taſte of happineſs refined and improved by the ſublimer views of reaſon and chriſtianity, all thoſe inferior fugitive delights vaniſh, and are counted of no value, when compared to theſe intellectual and permanent enjoyments we are made capable of; to thoſe raviſhing views of GOD and his operations, which tranſport the ſoul with gratitude, and elevate it above every thing earthly and ſenſual, above every mean and created excellency, to a rapturous adoration of that uncreated, that ſovereign Author of all bliſs and being, whoſe glory covereth the heavens, and the whole earth is full of his praiſe.

ESSAY III.

A View of HUMAN LIFE.

Thurſday, Jan. 16. 1766.

Fugit hora levibus alis.

"Time on ſwifteſt pinions flies."

THE riſe and fall of nations may be contemplated with advantage by the curious; but thoſe changes and revolutions which fall within the compaſs of our own experience muſt to all in general be ſtill more intereſting and improving: The periodical diſtribution of human life favours ſuch improvement, by bringing our experience in this way more home to our memory and reflection: The events of one year, and its departure, we are naturally reminded of by the commencement of another, which is likewiſe haſtening to its concluſion.

But however often we are thus reminded of human frailty and mortality, there is nothing ſooner forgot; or, at leaſt, whatever conviction it may work with us in the caſe of others, it has not eaſily the ſame effect in our own: The reaſon of this diſtinction is, that we do not enter into the ſchemes and projects of others ſo as to be blinded

blinded and infatuated by them; we conſider theſe more impartially; but, when the caſe comes to be our own, we act very differently. We are ſtill forming new engagements, new ſchemes for futurity, without ever thinking that we may want time to accompliſh our deſigns, and enjoy the fruits of them: We live, in ſhort, as if we were to live always; as if we carried length of days in our right hand; when there is not one day the ſun riſes, in which the eyes of thouſands are not cloſed in death.

So far indeed we judge rightly, that we are deſigned to be active: The thoughts of our end ought not to mar action, enjoyment, or a reaſonable foreſight, but to regulate our courſe of action and meaſure of enjoyment, and, with this view, to make us conſider the diſtributions of providence, ſome of which are of a more public, others of a more private nature; the former have a more univerſal Language, the latter are addreſſed to fewer, but call them to particular attention.

The ſhortneſs of human life is one of thoſe ſubjects that has been moſt elegantly treated by Moraliſts and Poets; but their deſcriptions are far exceeded by thoſe of Scripture. Short indeed, may we ſay, is life, when compared to eternity; ſhort when compared to the duration of angels,

ſhort, as it ſtands at preſent, when compared to the age of the Antediluvians; and yet even this, when we review it, how quickly does it ſeem to have paſſed? Adam lived 930 years, and he died; Seth lived 912 years, and he died; Methuſelah lived 969 years, and he died: We read of an eminent perſon, who, on attentively reviewing this account of their life and death in quick ſucceſſion, retired into a monaſtery, as thinking nothing in ſo ſhort a life worth the being eagerly purſued, and that no part of it ſhould be abſtracted from devotion. Large as the periods might appear, when at their beginning, what are they in the review? Or, what is any difference between them? They are but as yeſterday when it is paſt, or as a watch of the night: How much more may this be ſaid of the period that is now fixed to human life, and which, making ſome allowance for differences of climate and caſual events, ſeems to have been much the ſame ſince the days of Moſes and his cotemporaries, Cadmus in Greece, and Amenophis * in Egypt, beſt known by his being (as is moſt likely) father to Seſoſtris the Great? We have no authentic records of any

* The name Pharaoh, given him in the Scripture, was common to the Egyptian Kings for ſome time, as that of Cæſar was to the Roman Emperors.

any other nation ſo far back; but it is probable that (with the allowances mentioned) the condition of human life, in reſpect of longevity, has been much the ſame over all, for more than 32 centuries that have intervened, ſince threeſcore and ten, or fourſcore years, were (generally ſpeaking) conſidered as the utmoſt verge of frail mortality.

We ſee then, in that comparative view in which life has been now conſidered, how ſhort it appears, even if it were all well employed; but how much ſhorter muſt our eſtimate be, if we conſider how it is divided and ſpent? How great a part of it is beſtowed upon the repairs and concerns of the body in one way or other, in the way of proviſion or recreation, and how great a part in a ſtate of utter inaction or ſleep? and even of that which is ſpent in thought; how much in idle and ſinful thought? What part of it then can we reckon rightly ſpent? Only what is ſpent in ſuch a way as has relation to eternity. Much is otherwiſe employed neceſſarily, but this alone profitably, and conſiſtently with our higheſt intereſts.

But, alas! how ſmall a part of our time is employed in this way? How many are they who think all the time loſt that is ſeemingly thus beſtowed; who think all

loſt that is abſtracted from their worldly purſuits, from the purſuits of wealth, honour, or pleaſure? How many who think that ſmall pittance of time a burden which is ſet apart for religious duties in the way of inſtruction or devotion? The contemplative or devout man is deemed recluſe, idle, and inactive. The man whoſe office has relation to another life, to admoniſh, direct, and exhort with a view to it, is thought the moſt uſeleſs member of ſociety, and is ſo indeed if he has no regard to the ends of his office. Very different (we may well ſuppoſe) ſhall our future views be, of the importance of employments, perſons, and purſuits, and it would now be our wiſdom to correct our views and ſentiments of things, and endeavour to conſider them in the ſame light in which we may moſt reaſonably ſuppoſe they ſhall appear to us, when this world paſſes away, through the unlimited periods of immortality.

According to the view which we are now taking of our preſent ſtate of exiſtence, we cannot however avoid obſerving, that when we conſider our own weakneſs and frailty, we may ſee cauſe to wonder, not ſo much at the ſhortneſs of human life, as that we live ſo long. Within are the ſeeds of diſeaſes and death, interwoven and mingled with our frame; without are many dangers

and

and diſtreſſes; while man is himſelf too weak to encounter, too blind to foreſee and eſcape them: Whence is it then that he is ſo eaſily deluded into a fond expectation of the long continuance of life? and why ſo much diſappointed when it is otherwiſe? The only way in which this can be accounted for is, that, beſides the eaſy progreſs there is from our wiſhes to our hopes, and beſides that activity, formerly mentioned, in forming new ſchemes and engagements, which we vainly reſolve to ſee an end of; beſides theſe, I ſay, we may obſerve, that it is too common with moſt of us, when we would judge of the extent of life, at leaſt in our own caſe, to imagine or preſent to ourſelves the longeſt period that is commonly attained; yea, and perhaps to extend it a little further, as ſeeing no impoſſibility in the caſe; while ſailing over the ſea of Life we make no doubt of reaching the fartheſt ſhore, becauſe others either have, or may have reached it. But how ſlight a foundation is this for our hopes? We may as well conclude, that becauſe others have arrived at a certain ſtature, we ſhall do the ſame.

All that ſhall now be added further on this intereſting ſubject, is, that if we are ſo ready to forget the ſhortneſs of life, the more pains ſhould be taken to impreſs our-

ſelves

ſelves duly with it, and thereby prevent too great an attachment to its pleaſures, or diſturbance from its calamities. Not that life is to be embittered by a view of its ſhortneſs, but that we ſhould learn from this the proper uſe and value of it, with the juſt eſtimate of things in it; any new evidence of frailty in ourſelves or others ſhould be improved for this purpoſe. Do we mourn the loſs of thoſe who were dear to us? then let us prepare to follow them. Do we ſee youth in all its bloom and vigour nipped by the relentleſs hand of death? then let us in no condition be ſecure. Do we hear the groans of our departing friends, and the ſighs of the living? let us attend to the one with ſubmiſſion, and to the other with ſympathy and fellow feeling. Inſtead of putting the evil day afar off, let us endeavour to make it familiar to our thoughts, and ſo to employ our days and years as that the laſt of them may not be dreaded as evil, but as bringing us nearer the attainment of that ſupreme good and felicity, which all the injuries of time, all the changes of life, never can impair or deſtroy.

ESSAY

ESSAY IV.

The ſame Subject continued.

Thurſday, Jan. 23. 1766.

Life has no Value, as an End, but Means:
An End deplorable! a Means divine!

YOUNG.

IT is a queſtion that will admit of ſome diſpute, whether, upon a proper ſurvey of the condition of mankind, it will be found, that good preponderates evil in the preſent life; or, in other words, whether, upon the whole, there be more in it of happineſs than of miſery, ſo as to make it a ſtate eligible for itſelf, without a view to any thing farther?

It would require a very minute ſcrutiny into the various circumſtances and diſpoſitions of men, to determine poſitively as to this; but if we judge from the experience of individuals, ſo far as we have acceſs to be acquainted with it, our concluſion will probably be, that this life deſerves no farther to be valued, than as we have therein the means of improving, for a ſtate of higher felicity and perfection.

This is a view of human life, very neceſſary to prevent our making its enjoyments

or

or ſufferings of more importance than they really are; and, in order to our having a proper view of its tranſitory nature in itſelf, ſo as not to put too high a value upon it, merely on its own account, we find that in the Sacred Writings, it is compared to whatever is moſt fleeting and ſhowy, but periſhing: It cometh forth as a flower, promiſes very fair in the beginning, and blooms with hope and expectation; preſents many gay and lively proſpects, and every thing is dreſt in the moſt gaudy colours. But, mark the iſſue! Theſe ſoon evaniſh as the beauty of a flower; the bloom fades, the colours decay; it droops under the ſhower, or is driven by the ſtorm; falls a prey to the hand of the plunderer, or withers of itſelf in the decline of the ſeaſon, and at approach of the wintery blaſts.

Let us but take a ſhort ſurvey of our own progreſs through life, and we ſhall ſoon ſee how applicable the ſimilitude: How airy our ſchemes in the morning of life! How fond perhaps the expectations of thoſe moſt nearly concerned in us! Imagination gilds the proſpect, and paints it in the moſt flattering colours; the faireſt ſide of things preſents itſelf; every thought of care and trouble is baniſhed, and the certain period of theſe joys and hopes is ſeldom reflected on.—Here therefore three conſiderations occur

occur, which, if properly attended to, might be a mean of preventing theſe fatal deluſions and miſtakes.

Firſt, That let our proſpects in life be ever ſo promiſing, there is a certain period fixed to life itſelf, and all that can be therein enjoyed or expected. As we cannot add one cubit to our ſtature, no more can all the powers of wealth and medicine add one month, or day, or minute, to our lives, much leſs prolong them at pleaſure.

The *ſecond* conſideration that occurs, is, that as the period of life now mentioned is certain, ſo we know not how early it may come, whether in the morning, in the evening, or at noon, at what hour of the day, or watch of the night; its coming ſome time or other is unavoidable, and we have no ſecurity againſt any time. Not that this is to ſour our enjoyments, or ſlacken our diligence; but to moderate our purſuit of every thing in life, and make us to weigh its end.

A *third* thing to be here conſidered, is, that even in this ſhort and very uncertain ſpace to which our days are confined, our hopes and proſpects may, by a thouſand unforeſeen events, be diſappointed. Whatever depends on the will of others, or even on ourſelves, is uncertain, and muſt in ſome degree be changeable. Whatever depends

pends on the influence of cauſes unknown to us is uncertain; and how great a ſhare of what we enjoy or expect, depends on ſuch cauſes as theſe? How few of them whoſe operation is known to us? And where they are in ſome meaſure known, how ſeldom are they at our command? Hence we ſee how little knowledge we have to diſcern, or power to accompliſh, and by how precarious a tenure we hold our all in life. Enough is ſeen to teach us the folly of truſting to obtain even a ſmall ſhare of what we may wiſh for therein; or, when got, to retain it long, or, to have always the ſame reliſh and enjoyment of it.

The uſe to be made of theſe, and the like conſiderations, is the making a proper eſtimate of life and its enjoyments, with a view to the end for which they were given us, and the improvement ſuited to it.

For if this life be ſo ſhort, no part of it ſhould be unemployed; let us not make it ſhorter by idleneſs, and much leſs by ill employment, by doing what we would wiſh afterwards to be undone. How oft do we think with ourſelves, that if the time paſt could be recalled, we would improve it much better than we did before? If ſo then, let us improve the preſent time to the beſt advantage: It is this only that is ours; it is dealt to us in ſmall but precious moments,

ments, and to improve theſe is the only way of recalling the time that is paſt. In order to improve them therefore, we have need to review our paſt conduct, to correct our paſt errors, and form good reſolutions for the future.

If this life be ſo ſhort and uncertain, how comfortable is it to conſider that it is not the whole of our exiſtence. Let us then view it in its proper light, not as a ſtate in itſelf compleat, but as a ſtate of trial and probation for eternity; as the infancy of our being, in which our want of age and experience makes us unfit for entering as yet on the poſſeſſion of our inheritance, and requires proper diſcipline and education, before we arrive at perfect manhood, and become fit for the exalted enjoyments and offices that hereafter await us.—Thus we ſee how our progreſs in true wiſdom and mental improvement, carries its influence beyond our preſent ſtate. But if in this our ſtate of infancy and trial, no pains are taken to cultivate thoſe habits of mind which are the proper foundations of happineſs, what hopes can there be of our attaining it? as reaſonably might we expect that a child brought up in all the arts of effeminacy and luxury, ſhould diſtinguiſh himſelf by his future vigour and capacity for action.

Finally: If this life be ſo ſhort, let nothing in it too much elevate or depreſs us, be the object of our fear or our confidence: How fooliſh would we reckon it, for a man under ſentence of death againſt to-morrow, to be much concerned about his accommodation to-day? How idle for a traveller to be much concerned about the complexion of every one he meets by the way? Why ſhould the tranſient occurrences of this life much affect us in our paſſage through it? Why ſhould we lay hold of any thing therein as a permanent good, or be as much diſconcerted by any loſs or ſuffering in life, as if it was never to have a period?

Who then is the man who may be ſaid to act wiſely in this caſe? Who the man that is leaſt liable to diſquietude and diſappointment? It is he who conſiders all human perſons and things as changeable and fluctuating, GOD alone as abiding; he who enjoys the company of his deareſt friends as knowing he muſt one day part with them, and he who parts with them as knowing he ſhall one day meet with them again; he who enjoys the advantages of this life as what he muſt reſign, and he who reſigns them with patience, in view of higher; he who enjoys the favour of the great without being elevated or corrupted, and can bear their diſpleaſure with the ſame equanimity.

Our

Our concluſion ſhall be in the words of that elegant writer who furniſhed our introduction to this Eſſay.

Looſe then from earth the graſp of fond deſire,
Weigh anchor, and ſome happier clime explore.

ESSAY V.

The Juriſdiction of Time.—An *Allegory*.

January 30. 1766.

—Carpe Diem quam minimum credula
Poſtero. HOR.

"This moment ſeize, nor truſt in what's to "come."

SOON as the birth of *Nature* was made known, the generation of *Time* was likeways promulgated: Sprung from the ſame parent, they grew up together; but *her* early beauty and fertility ſoon diſtinguiſhed her; while, for want of theſe, in his younger years *he* continued in obſcurity; his character not much known, nor his acquaintance cultivated; he made himſelf, however, ſo neceſſary for carrying on her operations, that he came to be appointed High-

Steward of her houſhold: No taſk could be preſcribed, nor any ſcheme either of buſineſs or pleaſure carried on without him. By his aſſiduity and impartiality in the adminiſtration of his office, he ſoon engaged the attention of all the other domeſticks; his judgment was appealed to, and his favour courted; a ſovereignty of power was alſo given him, to be co-extended with the dominion of Nature.

The firſt who had recourſe to him were the votaries of *Pleaſure*; theſe made up a conſiderable branch of the family under his management; for then it was only a family, tho' ſoon enlarged into an empire. The votaries of Pleaſure were falſely ſo called, for Pleaſure was not confined to them, either in reſpect of the purſuit or the attainment of it; their miſtake in the purſuit, by a choice of ſuch pleaſures as had not the ſanction of Time, was the reaſon of their obtaining ironically this appellation; the more therefore that they ſollicited the favour of the Steward, againſt his judgment and their own real intereſt, their ſuit was conſidered by him as the more perverſe and undutiful, and it was rejected accordingly: They were not, however, diverted from their deluſive purſuits by ſuch expreſſions of his diſpleaſure as were either paſt or expected; and as his preſence, tho' fleeting

ing and momentary, could not be evaded, his preſent indulgence ſatisfied them, however ſhort its continuance; and this indulgence was granted as long as a promiſcuous diſtribution of his favours required it: But finding that ſuch a momentary uncertain gratification was all that could be obtained, and even this accompanied with a continual dread of its being withdrawn, the votaries of Pleaſure became, inſtead of ſuitors, profeſſed enemies of *Time*, and by a diſſipation of his gifts ſtudied to deſpiſe and deſtroy him.

Such was alſo the event with reſpect to another numerous body of ſuitors equally unſucceſsful, tho' not equally active, and diſtinguiſhed by the name of the *Children* of *Idleneſs*. Tho' theſe were likewiſe of *Nature's* domeſticks, yet their immediate anceſtor was always known to be an enemy to Time: They inherited his hatred, but were remarkable for their impotence; ſome favours indeed they would gladly have obtained, as they could not ſhake off their dependence on the Steward; but there was a peculiarity in his form which always occaſioned their diſappointment; there was only one lock of hair on his forehead, all behind was bald*; and ſo quick were his motions, that without holding him by the forelock he could not be detained, nor any ſuit

* Fronte capillata, poſt eſt occaſio calva. CATO.

overtake him: The Children of Idleneſs were neither nimble nor vigilant enough for this, and before their ſuit was ready to be preſented, the opportunity was loſt; but as they ſeldom allowed themſelves to think on conſequences, however certain and important, no diſappointment gave them much trouble, if it did not affect their preſent eaſe and ſecurity.

The *Sons* of *Miſchief* made up another tribe of attendants; unlucky indeed in their name, and unnatural in their character, tho' alſo claiming to be the offspring of *Nature*: They had more foreſight than the votaries of Pleaſure, and more vigour than the Children of Idleneſs; they had alſo a juſter value for *Time*, and watched every opportunity of ſeizing and gaining him to their party; but tho' he often favoured their induſtry ſo far as to condeſcend to this, yet he never failed in the iſſue to turn their criminal deſigns againſt themſelves; ſo that though always doing ſomething, either they themſelves, or their labours, behoved at laſt to be undone.

Next to theſe were the *Slaves* of *Paſſion;* eager and impetuous in their purſuits, they either anticipated the favours of Time, or bore with impatience his ſlow career; ſlow as it appeared to them, by viewing him only in his approach, for in this light he

ſeemed

ſeemed to move heavily, and his wings were artfully concealed; but when ſo far paſt as to be viewed behind, his broad pinions were widely diſplayed, and his motions ſeemed rapid as the wind; years, months and days *, (tho' his own avowed offſpring) were obliged to fly before him, giving place to a new ſucceſſion of the ſame progeny equally volatile and evaneſcent. *Paſſion* was a ſevere taſk-maſter; he either found his ſlaves blind, or endeavoured to make them ſo; hence the motions of Time eſcaped their diſcernment; not that they undervalued his favour, but they ſtudied to make it ſubſervient to the haughty dictates of Paſſion; and though they had not liberty enough to be idle, their employment of time was generally ſelf-deſtructive, it was divided betwixt offending and repenting, one of them the work of days, and the other of years.

Near a-kin to theſe were the followers of *Fancy*, and their event often ſimilar; tho' the favour of *Time* was implored and made ſubſervient to their labours. Paſſion was an imperious maſter, Fancy a capricious tutor. *Faſhion* was the daughter of Fancy

* The diviſion of time into years, months, and days, has a foundation in Nature; that into weeks muſt among Chriſtians be aſcribed to revelation; among Egyptians, Chineſe, and Indians, to ſome tradition older than the firſt diſperſion of mankind.

Fancy, and had likewiſe her admirers. *Time* would give no laſting ſanction to their deſultory purſuits, ſo that doing and undoing was their alternate employment.

The ſame eminence of office that creates enemies, draws likewiſe after it flatterers and friends. Hence the number of *Time-Deſtroyers* was ſomewhat balanced by a groveling herd of Sycophants, known by the name of *Time-ſervers;* but as their ſervice was ſoon found to be fickle and mercenary, they could get no fixed wages from the Steward.

Very different was his reception of others, who ſoon appeared to merit his friendſhip: Few as they were in number, they diſdained the low arts of flattery; yet they claimed the protection of Time, as being of his kindred and friends. They conſiſted of two ſmall families, not much diſtinguiſhed by their rank or fortune: *Truth* and *Virtue* were their founders, and always in ſtrict alliance with one another. They were indeed inſeparable, and enjoyed every thing in common; there was alſo ſuch a reſemblance between them, that many people either miſtook the one for the other, or reckoned them only one family. But though they always travelled together, their offices or departments were different: Truth ſaw into the moſt ſecret receſſes of Nature, and had

had always the place of guide; Virtue, though not ſo quick-ſighted, was ſtrenuous in their mutual defence. They were both the offſpring of Nature, in her early age of innocence, and as ſuch claimed the favour of Time for themſelves and their deſcendents. That favour ſhould be granted, was not now the queſtion; but how to make it adequate to their deſert. Time thought his own gifts inſufficient, he therefore conſigned them over to Immortality: The dominions of this potentate were nearly adjoining, but the entrance to them was ſteep and narrow; of this Virtue was appointed the guardian, ſo that none could enter without his paſſport; and Truth was made keeper of the records, while the empire of Nature endured.

Such were the numerous bands by which the favour of Time was ſollicited, and ſuch his various appointments and deciſions with reſpect to them. But the contention that appeared among others, whom he obſerved advancing towards him, made ſome new formalities neceſſary for the ſupport of his own authority.

ESSAY

ESSAY VI.

The ſame Subject continued.

Thurſday, Feb. 6. 1766.

——*Venit, ecce, optabile tempus!* OVID.

"Time clears his way, and firm his Edicts ſtand."

NATURE ſaw her family increaſing, and enlarged her theatre for its reception; on this (by her permiſſion) *Time* erected his ſtage: On the right hand were ſpacious fields, adorned with perpetual verdure, and known by the name of the regions of *Immortality*. On the left was a ſtupendous precipice, hanging hideouſly over the pit of *Oblivion*: In the middle, between theſe, *Time* ſat enthroned, holding a ſceptre as the badge of his delegated authority, while miniſters on each hand attended to execute his orders. *Fame*, as his herald, with laurel-crowns on the right leading to Immortality; *Ignominy* and *Shame* on the left devoting to Oblivion. The banner of *Time* was diſplayed, and the various candidates appeared.

Arts and *Sciences* were then in their infancy; they were begot by *Genius* upon *Induſtry*; fair among the offſpring of Nature and promiſing

promiſing *Immortality* to themſelves and their progenitors: This however was not to be granted indiſcriminately; *Time* allowed them a fair hearing; *Novelty* and *Utility* appeared to plead their cauſe. The plea of the firſt was rejected, but *Utility* ſoon obtained a favourable decree, and got his clients committed to the cuſtody of *Fame*; while they who had *Novelty* only to plead, were gradually juſtled to the left, and ſunk unobſerved into the pit of *Oblivion*.

The next that preſented ſeemed to have more maturity of years; he was grave and ſtudious in his aſpect, and maſculine in his features, his name was *Learning*, and he pleaded his own cauſe. He claimed kindred and acquaintance with thoſe who had been already ſo ſucceſsful; but it was aſked, If they owed any thing to his friendſhip and aſſiſtance? They immediately acknowledged his care, and owned him as their kinſman and guardian. Upon this, *Time* ſmiled on him with complacency, and he modeſtly touched the ſceptre. *Fame* underſtood the ſignal, and wafted him to the regions of *Immortality*.

Encouraged by the ſucceſs of the laſt, another candidate appeared. In his aſpect and demeanour he ſeemed to reſemble *Learning*, but it was only at firſt ſight; he had a ſupercilious look, and a ſtrut peculiar

to

to himſelf; by theſe he was ſoon betrayed and known to be only *Pedantry*: He likewiſe attempted to plead his own cauſe; but was too ſcholaſtic to be underſtood. Confident, however, of ſucceſs, he attempted to touch the ſceptre: Time puſhed him off with ſuch violence, that he fell into the hands of the miniſters on the left. Diſconcerted by his fall, ſhame, for the firſt time, got the maſtery of him; and, while endeavouring to give one lofty look back from the precipice, he was eaſily overthrown.

Amongſt the crowd that ſurrounded the throne, one ſeemed more than ordinarily attentive, not ſo much to aſk favours for himſelf, as to determine with reſpect to the merits of others; he was complained of as uſurping the office of Time, and carried tumultuouſly to the bar; ſome called him Envy, others Prejudice; but, turning with indignation from his accuſers, by the large ſpectacles he wore, Time ſoon knew him to be *Criticiſm*: "I uſurp not thy office (ſays "he) O judge! I am only an enemy to other "uſurpers; thoſe who accuſe me are either "ignorant or arrogant, and would have thy "judgment anticipated in their own favour. "With more courage than caution I with-"ſtood them, and am therefore brought "here as a criminal, and not as a candi-"date. But I may claim the ſame honours

"with

" with Learning; he has often been at my " ſchool, ſometimes indeed he has felt the " ferula, but my diſcipline has improved " him for Immortality."

Time heard his defences patiently, and diſmiſſed him with this advice: " Take not " Envy or Prejudice for your counſellors, " and you ſhall not be involved in their " guilt. Beware of that ignorance and ar- " rogance with which you charge your op- " poſers.—When Learning comes to your " ſchool, let not falſe Taſte be his tutor; " leave dogmatiſm to pedagogues, and de- " traction to prudes; but let Knowledge " and Candour be your aſſociates, and you " may depend on my protection: I only " promiſe you immortality, according as " you contribute to help others to the at- " tainment of it."

Thus the ſentence of Criticiſm was pronounced, and he was ready to depart from the bar, when another priſoner was brought forward, whom he knew to be his old friend *Satyr*; he had long been uſher of his ſchool, and thrown from one claſs to another; his aſpect was forbidding, and he was generally dreaded for his ſeverity. It was ſaid that he was the child of *Wit*, by a peeviſh wife whoſe name was *Ill-nature*—that he had been nurſed by *Diſcontent* and *Diſappointment*, in the bilious regions of *Spleen*—that he had a ſprightly

ſiſter called *Raillery*, and that *Rudeneſs* was his brother; the former taking moſt of the father, and the latter, a great big boy, the favourite of his mother.——The whole family was more feared than loved, ſo that *Satyr* ſtood his tryal with ſome diſadvantage: But Time, not influenced by popular prejudice, at his own deſire, doomed him to ſweep the ſtage. In the execution of this office he was often troubleſome, and bruſhed without diſtinction his enemies and friends. Some he wantonly drove to the brink of the precipice, while others took ſanctuary at the bar of Time; among the latter appeared his own parent *Wit*, with a rival known by the name of *Judgment*: Both of them complained of the laſt priſoner's officiouſneſs, and both contended for admiſſion to Immortality. *Wit* was of the family of *Fancy*, and often wore a female garb. Nature acknowledged his aid when decked to the greateſt advantage* This now was his principal plea, and urged with addreſs and acuteneſs; but *Judgment* had more to plead than ſuch outward decorations; he was known to be divine in his extract, claiming kindred to *Reaſon* and *Intellect*, while conformity

* True Wit is Nature, to Advantage dreſt;
What oft was thought, but ne'er ſo well expreſt.
POPE.

formity to his impartial dictates gave perfection to the offspring of Nature. Judgment got the ſanction of Time, nor were the merits of Wit neglected; while friendly to Truth and to Virtue, he was allowed the Laurels of Fame.

The trial of *Beauty* was leſs ſerious; it was ſentiment and not argument that ſhe relied on: The graces of her perſon, and diſtinction due to her ſex, eaſily procured her acceſs to the bar.

She appear'd in all her Virgin Charms,
While ſmiling CUPID *revell'd in her Arms.*

Thus deemed invincible, ſhe longed to be declared immortal. Much incenſe indeed ſhe had received, and Time at firſt favoured her conqueſts; but fearing ſuch a rival for empire, he artfully ſeized her young champion: His wings he clipped, his ſhafts he blunted, and left him to flutter harmleſs on the ſtage. *Beauty* ſeemed to think herſelf wounded, when her power of wounding ceaſed; but applying to *Virtue* for a paſſport, ſhe got ſafe to the regions of *Immortality*.

While the ages of *Time* were revolving, his procedure ſeemed ſolemn and ſlow; kings, heroes, and ſtateſmen came forward, appealing to his ſovereign decree. Numerous was the next band of plaintiffs, and eager their conteſt at the bar; their opini-

ons and languages were different; their aſpect oft clouded with thought; ſome took the name of *Authors*, and pleaded the ſtability of their works; others, not ſo creative in their fancy, would, as *Writers*, claim the ſanction of Time: Some of theſe were his occaſional ſervants, and as ſuch, had their wages aſſigned: The miniſters of party they were deemed; the tranſient meteors of Fame; to be coeval with their temporary labours, and to ſhine till their parties expired.

While theſe venal tools of ambition ſtrove to juſtle one another off the ſtage, Integrity was often injured, and Innocence in danger of being infected; *Genius* and *Induſtry* were either loſt in the croud, or with difficulty reſcued from the pit of Oblivion. From the periodical increaſe of theſe corruptions, Time drew a proper antidote againſt them: Literary centinels were appointed, and their different poſts aſſigned them: Occaſional Writers they might alſo be called; but not of the ſervile herd. Their abours, though likewiſe occaſional, were more luminous and laſting. "To raiſe the *Genius* and to mend the *Heart*," was their province, and they were promiſed the ſanction of Time while devoted to *Virtue* and *Truth*; their miniſters they were, and would gladly have claimed their reward, that Virtue

tue ſhould grant his paſſport, and Truth record them in the annals of Fame. An appeal was made to the Judge, and he iſſued this final decree, "That a proper atten-"tion to Time, would lead to Immorta-"lity."

ESSAY VII.

On *Patriotic*, *Political*, and *Humorous* WRITING.

Thurſday, Feb. 13. 1766.

O LIBERTY! *O* VIRTUE! *O my* COUNTRY!
Addiſon's Cato.

IF the common impatience of readers, to get quickly at the general ſcope of what is before them, will allow of their glancing at this day's motto, or judging from it of their bill of fare for the time, I make no doubt but ſome of them will begin to ſuſpect, that the *Remembrancer* has departed from his original plan, and fallen into the old beaten path of *Politicks*. I hope however very ſoon to make it appear that this ſuſpicion is groundleſs; and, tho' I have cho-

ſen this manner of introducing myſelf to the ſubject I have in my view; yet I cannot ſo far approve of violent pretenſions of any kind, as to adopt the pompuouſly pathetic ſtile of thoſe, who ſeem to think that they cannot ſufficiently diſtinguiſh themſelves for love of their country, without endeavouring on all occaſions to magnify its danger; as if what an eminent wit ironically obſerved with reſpect to the church, above half a century ago, was to be always literally underſtood of the ſtate, "That it "was in danger, ought to be in danger, "and that it would be dangerous for it not "to be in danger." This querulous or petulant humour, ſo enfeebling to government, and unfriendly to national ſpirit and enterprize, may be often an inlet to corruption, as the neareſt way of quelling it, and is very different from the unconquerable ſpirit of the old Romans; when, after the memorable battle of Cannæ, they gave public thanks to their General, tho' he returned defeated, becauſe he had not deſpaired of the republic.

For my own part, I have long thought religion and morality in much more immediate danger amongſt us, than either liberty or property; but which muſt undoubtedly involve theſe at length in their ruins:

Nor

Nor can I help conſidering the pompuous declamations and complaints of ſome, with reſpect to the two laſt, in much the ſame light as I do thoſe of any actor who may happen to perſonate Cato on the ſtage, without any real feeling or impreſſion of what he ſays, further than is neceſſary to gain ſome notice or applauſe from the audience.

Thus "the political world is a ſtage, and "all the men and women merely players." It is not my buſineſs or intention at preſent to expoſe them. I know that people in maſk ſeldom love to be diſcovered, and have the charity to think that ſome who profeſs themſelves to be patriots, are ſo in reality, and very probably are thoſe who make the leaſt noiſe with their profeſſion, but are ready for action the moment that duty calls them to ſtand forth in defence of their King and country.

After ſo long a preamble, it is now high time that I ſhould make known the ſubject I have at preſent in view, and to which I am engaged by the friendly admonitions contained in the following ſhort epiſtle:

To the REMEMBRANCER.

SIR,—However much I confeſs myſelf pleaſed with your plan, and, hitherto, with the

the execution of it, yet I cannot help obſerving, that there is one material point neceſſary to be further attended to, in order to promote the ſucceſs of your labours; and that is, to engage the public attention ſo far as to procure them a reading from thoſe who have moſt need to peruſe them, and who, I find, will ſcarcely be perſuaded to beſtow a few minutes for this purpoſe, if they may expect to meet with nothing in them that relates either to *Politicks* or *Pleaſure*. The latter I leave to the gay world to remind you of; the former I only ſuggeſt as proper to be attended to, ſo far as religion or morality may be affected by them. And as it does not appear to me that you have declined to enter on the political ſtage, from any incapcity of acting ſome part upon it—even granting that you are above being influenced by motives of private utility only, it may be worth your while to conſider, whether an enlargement of your plan may not likewiſe be for public benefit, and the more ſo that I find the ſphere of its uſefulneſs is enlarged beyond the circle of the Bath Chronicle, by your labours being allowed a place in one of the beſt weekly collections of the metropolis. If there is any preſumption in my ſuggeſting this, I hope the encouragement you gave to correſpond with

with you, ſome weeks ago, will be a ſufficient apology for

4th Feb. Your's, &c. POLYBIUS.

Having agreeably to my promiſe ſoon after the commencement of my preſent literary office, communicated the ſage advice of Polybius to the public, I ſhall endeavour to avail myſelf of it, only ſo far as the public emolument requires, without departing from my eſtabliſhed plan; and ſhall therefore, in my next, offer a few thoughts on national or civil liberty, ſo far as national virtue and happineſs may be affected by it.

As for ſchemes of private utility, I am well aware that this is not the way of promoting them; and that to volunteer it, as ſome do in the ſervice of the public, without conſulting the general taſte, is often attended with inconvenience; but a conſciouſneſs of the rectitude of our intentions, will do more than balance it? And ſuch as have a nearer view of the verge of life, and vanity of its proſpects, are in leſs danger of having their inclinations warped by them, ſo far as to ſhake that integrity and independence of mind, which are the glory of any character, and will not fail of obtaining, in due time, their reward, but which are too often obſerved to be ſwallowed

ed up when they approach too near the fatal Vortex of *Politics*.

In regard to that fidelity I owe my correſpondents, by inſerting ſuch of their admonitions or informations as appear any way conducive to the ſucceſs of my undertaking, I muſt next beg leave to communicate the advice of a fair correſpondent, having always a particular deference for her ſex, and an ambition of devoting my labours to their ſervice.

To the REMEMBRANCER.

SIR,—Though I have now learned to ſpell the name by which you chuſe to diſtinguiſh yourſelf, yet I cannot ſay I am as yet thoroughly reconciled to what you call your plan; I have reaſon to believe that I ſpeak the ſentiments of many others of your own ſex as well as mine, when I tell you, that the being reminded of what is paſt, or warned of what is to come, are exerciſes too ſerious to be generally agreeable; and you ſeemed to be aware of it, when you promiſed ſomething humorous to qualify them: It would be inconſiſtent with your avowed ſincerity, to ſuppoſe that you would have made ſuch a promiſe without ſome conſciouſneſs of your ability to accompliſh it;

it; nor do you ſeem to be entirely deſtitute of talents for this, if we may judge from ſome of your Eſſays; but if your imaginary dignity will not allow you to ſtoop ſo far as to apply your talents for this purpoſe, your labours will be as much loſt in reſpect of ſome who would wiſh to be your readers, as the ſtern precepts of antient Philoſophers. I have been told, by a bookiſh old aunt of mine, that there was one of them who did nothing but weep, and another who did nothing but laugh. I would not wiſh you to take either of theſe for your pattern, but to have a mixture of them both: Or, if a preference muſt be given to one of them, my humble opinion is, that you will have more ſucceſs in laughing us out of our follies, than by lamenting or mourning over them; and yet I cannot ſay that I have been made to laugh half a dozen times by all you have as yet offered for my entertainment. Your account of the trial of Beauty, pleaſes me: I was afraid you would not have brought her ſo well off; nor could you have been ſo lively and poetical in your deſcription of her, without ſome experience of her influence. The Parſon tells me there is ſomething of wit runs through the whole of your two laſt papers, if I could find it out; but when I do not (as is often the caſe) it is all one to

me

me as if there was no ſuch thing. I think however, you ſeem to mean well; and if you do, you will not refuſe to profit, even by the advice of a female correſpondent, eſpecially as you invited me to aſſume this character. If you are not a ſtranger to routs, and balls, and card tables, let us hear ſomething about them, and you will oblige your friend, if you engage her to continue your reader,

7th Feb. HILARIA.

Amidſt Hilaria's gaiety I have ſome reaſon to believe that her correſpondence is a little indebted to the old aunt and parſon, or at leaſt that ſhe has benefited by their preceeding inſtructions. There ſhall in due time be a proper regard paid to her admonitions; but ſhe muſt remember that tho' we may be laught out of our follies, yet there muſt be a ſeverer diſcipline for our vices. The former of theſe is all that I ſuppoſe my ſprightly correſpondent has been acquainted with, ſo that I excuſe her not attending ſo much to the proper treatment of the latter. Neither of her friends could determine more judiciouſly as to the merits of the weeping and laughing philoſophers, than ſhe has done herſelf; mean time, let it be the ſubject of their mutual conſideration and correſpondence, how both characters may be moſt conveniently united in the *Remembrancer.*

ESSAY VIII.

On LIBERTY: Its *Value*, *Origin*, and *Progreſs*.

Thurſday, Feb. 20.. 1766.

Libertas, quæ ſera, tamen reſpexit inertem.
VIRG.

"Secure, at length, I hail kind Freedom's ſway.

ABOUT half-way from Venice to Rome, lies the ſmall town of St Marino, often viſited by thoſe who travel through Italy, though not on the common road. The whole number of its inhabitants does not much exceed 5000, who are united into one ſmall republic, with laws and magiſtrates peculiar to themſelves, and diſtinct from the neighbouring ſtates of Italy, though they are reckoned of the dukedom of Urbino.

The Village is ſituated moſtly on one hill, remarkable for its barrenneſs and coldneſs, when compared to other towns at no great diſtance; but this unfavourableneſs of its ſituation, joined to the poverty and peaceableneſs of its inhabitants, ſeems to have ſecured them from the encroachments of the neighbouring ſtates, ſo that they lay claim to a freedom and independency for up-

wards of a thouſand years back, ſave that they are under the protection of the Pope, tho' he does not claim any juriſdiction over them; nor have they ever ſought to enlarge their territories, the whole of which will not meaſure above three Engliſh miles in length, and nine or ten round; and as they are not capable of further improvement by agriculture, nor conveniently ſituated for commerce or manufactures, the number of fixed inhabitants is generally much the ſame at all times; nor would they exchange their poverty and obſcurity, for the moſt opulent and ſplendid reſidence in Europe.

The enjoyment they have of LIBERTY and *Independency*, is the only reaſon they aſſign for this.

The ſame has been ſometimes remarked as the ground of that attachment which ſome remote iſlanders diſcover to their own ſociety and dwellings; but this is the leſs to be wondered at in them, that they know little of any other habitations. With the inhabitants of St Marino, however, this is not the caſe; for they ſee ſufficient diſplays of luxury and grandeur when they travel but a few leagues, and yet the *Liberty* they enjoy at home, makes them always eager to return.

What

What is this LIBERTY, therefore, which has ſuch powerful charms for making poverty, pain, and even death itſelf, ſometimes eligible in its defence?

The name, in a more general ſenſe, has been well known to moral writers in all ages and parts of the world: Jews, Greeks, and Indians, as well as the moraliſts of times and countries leſs remote, have been divided in their ſentiments about moral *Liberty*; ſome maintaining it to be inconſiſtent with the divine Providence and preſcience, and the influence that different motives ſeem to have neceſſarily upon the human will: Nor indeed can the manner in which it is reconcileable to all theſe be explained; but reject it we cannot, without deſtroying moral agency, and accountableneſs for our actions; and as for the influence of motives, if they are internal or rational, the being influenced by them is very conſiſtent with moral liberty.

If we appeal to every man's experience and conſciouſneſs, there can be no doubt of our having a natural power to chuſe or refuſe, and to act or not to act accordingly, when under no outward reſtaint. This power we call *Liberty*, and it is enjoyed in its greateſt perfection in a ſtate of nature without any engagement in ſociety, becauſe there it has no other reſtraint than what a-

riſes from the law of nature; but in the freeſt ſociety that can be ſuppoſed, it is reſtrained, or rather regulated by its laws likewiſe; ſo that men do not enter into ſociety to increaſe their Liberty, but to enjoy a ſmaller ſhare of it with more ſecurity; to ſecure their perſons and property by renouncing a part of their liberty, or reſigning their own will in ſome meaſure to that of the ſociety they belong to. But man's natural deſire of liberty would, no doubt, make that ſociety the moſt deſirable, in which moſt of it might be retained; *i. e.* in which there was moſt of national and perſonal liberty.

That liberty which any nation or ſtate enjoys from without, in reſpect of its neighbours, may be called national—that which its own conſtituent members enjoy among themſelves, perſonal, and both concur to conſtitute civil or political liberty, the very eſſence of which conſiſts in our having the protection of ſociety, with as little encroachment as poſſible on our natural freedom and independency, or in having all the ſecurity to our perſons and poſſeſſions that ariſes from the union of many, for mutual defence; with as little reſtraint as poſſible from the interfering intereſts and inclinations of many thus united.

Hence

Hence we may obſerve, that tho' in the larger ſtates or communities, there is more of ſafety or protection from without, than in ſmall ones; yet, as there are more whoſe intereſts muſt be conſulted, there muſt be more of reſtraint on the liberty of individuals; and that the more there is of union in the views or intereſts of individuals thus united, the reſtraint will be the leſs.

The want of this union in their views and intereſts has occaſioned convulſions in many ſtates otherwiſe well conſtituted, as in the caſe of the Patricians and Plebeians in Rome; to which we might add that of the nobles and commons, the civil and military powers, the church and ſtate, the landed and trading intereſts, in various other communities.

With reſpect to that national liberty, which conſiſts in the ſafety or protection of any ſtate from without, it may alſo be obſerved, that it is not always diminiſhed by whatever diminiſhes the internal or perſonal liberty of its ſubjects, or that exemption which it implies from a dependence upon the arbitrary will of their ſuperiors or governours; and hence we ſee that ſome nations, where deſpotic government prevailed, have long preſerved a freedom and independency with reſpect to their neighbours, and even extended their conqueſts over

them, while their own ſubjects groaned under the yoke of ſlavery and tyranny. But when the ſmalleſt breach is made upon a conſtitution of this kind, or any advantage gained over it, ſuch ſubjects were never found equally reſolute in their own defence with thoſe who had higher notions of internal liberty, and enjoyed the fruits of it: It is theſe only who have found *their lives in its poſſeſſion happy, or their deaths glorious in its juſt defence.*

To trace the origin of *Civil Liberty*, as comprehending both what is called national and perſonal, the ſtate and privileges of man by nature muſt be enquired into, and what it is that either gives or ought to give one man a ſuperiority over another.

Nature ſeems originally to have eſtabliſhed an equality among men, in reſpect of many particulars from which a diſtinction is afterwards acquired; and an inequality in reſpect of others which do not always occaſion or create ſuch a diſtinction. That ſuperiority therefore which ariſes from the appointment of Nature ſhould be attended to, as being more friendly to liberty than what ariſes from birth, accident, or policy; theſe give one man often a ſuperiority over others in reſpect of riches, honours, or power, where Nature puts him on a level with them.

Nature

Nature acknowledges no civil diſtinction, but what ariſes from merit, and this merit has reſpect chiefly to *Genius*, *Induſtry*, and VIRTUE; either of theſe, and much more all united, give that ſuperiority to one man over another, which is of Nature's appointment; ſo that whatever is acquired without theſe, muſt be reckoned adventitious or unnatural, and is not a ſufficient foundation for ſuch a ſuperiority.

Without ſome ſubordination, or ſubjection of one man to another, no ſociety could be eſtabliſhed or ſupported; but when men began firſt to form themſelves voluntarily into ſocieties, no ſuperiority would be eaſily admitted or yielded to, but what aroſe from merit in ſome of thoſe reſpects mentioned. Superior genius or capacity would be acknowledged (for even Nature itſelf appears to have raiſed ſome above the common level in this reſpect) and much more ſo if theſe ſuperior talents ſeemed to be improved by induſtry and experience; but if ſuperior VIRTUE likewiſe appeared in the exerciſe or application of them, it would engage men to give up ſome part of their natural liberty and equality, for the ſake of that benefit they might expect from ſubjection to ſuch ſuperior merit. Superior force might indeed have the ſame effect, of bringing ſome under ſubjection to others; but

but we ſpeak not at preſent of thoſe caſes in which liberty is violently invaded, but of thoſe in which it is voluntarily reſigned.

Parentage gives likewiſe a ſuperiority, but this is only domeſtic, and implies no more than a right, or rather duty, on the ſide of the parents, to adviſe or direct the will of their children, till they are of an age and capacity fit for directing themſelves; their will grows up, as it were, before their underſtandings, the immaturity of which is ſupplied by paternal inſtruction, but without any infringement on liberty, or any ſuperiority inconſiſtent with that which is mentioned as given by Nature.

Tho' in the firſt formation of ſocieties, a regard would probably be had to ſuch a ſuperiority, ſo far as it could be diſcovered and aſcertained; yet to aſcertain a ſuperiority of merit, would, even then, and much more afterwards, be extremely difficult; envy or prejudice would reject many juſt claims to it; ſelf-partiality, on the other hand, would make many claim it where it was not due, or annex it to the other diſtinctions mentioned, that ariſe from a ſuperiority in reſpect of riches, outward honours, or power.

To obviate therefore the difficulty of aſcertaining the diſtinctions of Nature, thoſe of Policy were introduced. When Men agreed

greed to reſign their natural liberty and equality, ſo far as to give up their own will and power to thoſe of the ſociety into which they entered, no more would probably be meant at firſt than either a majority or repreſentation of thoſe who were free members of ſuch a ſociety, and whoſe will was not to yield to every new emergency, but to be fixed by general eſtabliſhed laws, extending to the variety of caſes that might occur, (ſo far as human foreſight could extend to them) and carrying in them all thoſe marks of ſuperiority which we mentioned as given by Nature to ſome individuals; and which being thus ſuppoſed to be ſtamped or impreſſed upon the laws, muſt give them a title to obedience and ſubjection, without any other encroachment on men's natural liberty, than is fit for them to have for their own ſafety and benefit.

Thus the joint will of the ſociety is expreſſed by the laws, and theſe become ſuperiors; but the power of the ſociety muſt be likewiſe united for ſupporting and executing theſe laws internally, as well as for external protection and defence; and for the readier exerciſe of this executive power in various emergencies, it muſt be committed to a few, whoſe authority cannot be limited in all caſes, and on whom therefore

fore there muſt be more dependence for liberty; which would make it of the higheſt conſequence to have this power committed to thoſe only to whom Nature has given that ſuperiority formerly mentioned, which beſt qualifies for the poſſeſſion of it, by ſecuring that liberty which is reſigned to it, and claims its ſhelter and protection.

But as the love of power is almoſt as univerſal as the love of liberty, in order to prevent a dangerous competition for the power now mentioned, the policy of different ſtates has eſtabliſhed certain laws, by which it is tranſmitted, either hereditarily, or by election, as beſt ſuits the principles of their conſtitution; and whether the diſtinctions of policy, in this caſe, be always agreeable to thoſe of Nature or not, yet the latter will, in the courſe of adminiſtration, have ſome influence and ſuperiority of merit, either in the ſupreme or ſubordinate departments of government, and be generally admitted as the moſt deſirable depoſitary of liberty.

After thus tracing the origin of civil liberty, it will be proper to conſider its conſequences, and how the various intereſts and purſuits of mankind are affected by it; but this muſt be the ſubject of another eſſay.

ESSAY

ESSAY IX.

On LIBERTY: Its *Nature*, *Reſtraints*, and *Influence*.

Thurſday, February 27. 1766.

Quæ ſit Libertas quæris? Nulli rei ſervire, nulli neceſſitati, nullis caſibus; fortunam in æquum deducere. SENECA.

"You aſk, What is Liberty? It is an exemption "from all ſervitude, from all neceſſity, from all "caſualty, and to be on equal terms with for- "tune itſelf."

METAPHYSICAL refinements in philoſophy, as well as politicks, have given riſe to many queſtions, which common ſenſe rejects. The exiſtence of Natural Evil has been made a queſtion by ſome; that of Moral Evil by others: But common ſenſe ſtill prevails ſo much over theſe falſe refinements in ſcience, that we may conſider the exiſtence of evil as undeniable, and therefore the origin of it as no improper ſubject of inquiry: So far as it has reſpect to human nature, it is commonly and juſtly aſcribed, not to any original depravity of its powers, but to the abuſe of *Liberty* in their exerciſe.

Liberty, in every ſenſe in which it is commonly underſtood and exerciſed, whether

ther moral or civil, is of ſuch value, that, even with all its conſequences, it is preferable to the want of it, *i. e.* in regard and ſubſerviency to the ends of our preſent exiſtence; for, to aſk, Why man was endowed with liberty of choice, when his abuſe of it muſt be ſuppoſed foreſeen with all its conſequences? would be aſking, Why God made him as he is? The Chriſtian Revelation ſhews how the Divine Goodneſs is hereby more illuſtriouſly diſplayed, and likewiſe juſtifies the dictates of reaſon and experience, with reſpect to man's being ſo far a free agent, as is neceſſary to render him accountable for his actions: This free agency, however, or liberty of action, as it reſpects individuals, has been the ſubject of much diſpute.

Man is, ſay ſome, as neceſſarily determined by inward motives of action, as if under the influence of outward force; but experience proves the contrary; he cannot indeed ſhew his liberty of indifference by acting in two contrary ways at the ſame time, but he can do it at different times, without a change of thoſe motives, which, when internal, are conſiſtent with the moſt perfect moral liberty; its eſſence conſiſts in a power of attending to thoſe internal motives, and acting accordingly.

A brute is not capable of underſtanding, or, being influenced by ſuch motives, and therefore

therefore cannot be called a free or moral agent; but man is; and, in this previous power, of attending, or not, to ſuch motives, rather than in yielding afterwards inſenſibly, tho' not involuntarily, to their influence, it is probable that moſt of his moral liberty conſiſts.

He is, upon the whole, at liberty to do even what appears to him evil as well as good; a power which would be very dangerous to himſelf and others, in the poſſeſſion of a being, ſo diſtinguiſhed for his capacities, and yet ſo depraved as man is, were it not under ſome reſtraint; an outward or phyſical reſtraint would counteract the wiſe ends of moral improvement and trial for which ſuch a power was originally given him; but there are various moral and civil reſtraints to which it is ſubject.

The firſt of theſe is from the law of nature, reaſon, and conſcience; the next is from intereſt and convenience; both theſe reſtraints upon Liberty take place even in a ſtate of nature *, and, inſtead of

* In a ſtate of nature, it may perhaps be ſaid, that the Law of Nature would be no great reſtraint for want of an executive power to enforce it; but in this ſtate, *i. e.* before men were united in ſociety, every man ſeems to have had this executive power, or a right to puniſh any manifeſt violation of the law of Nature; and hence Cain was

implying imperfection, are conſiſtent with, and ſome of them neceſſary, to the moſt perfect moral liberty; in the enjoyment of which, even when engaged in ſociety, with as few additional reſtraints as poſſible, ſeems to conſiſt the moſt perfect civil or political liberty, comprehending (as was ſet forth in our laſt eſſay) both national or public liberty, and that which is private or perſonal.

That there ſhould, in a ſocial ſtate, be ſome additional reſtraints upon liberty, from the municipal laws of ſociety, is unavoidable; and as long as theſe are conſiſtent with the reſtraints mentioned in a ſtate of nature, which every reaſonable creature ought to be ſubject to, the advantages of ſociety abundantly compenſate them, and the members of ſuch a ſociety may be ſaid to be free; for they are ſubject to no laws but ſuch as have their own conſent and approbation, either tacit or expreſſed; but when the reſtraints, they are brought under, are either unreaſonable and unneceſſary, or uncertain and arbitrary, as not being limited by fixed laws, they cannot be ſaid to be free, for the ſecurity of their perſons and

was afraid that every one who found him would ſlay him: Such a fear might be mentioned as an additional reſtraint on liberty in a ſtate of nature.

and poſſeſſions depends upon the arbitrary will of a ſuperior; they are brought under a ſubjection to his authority, in whatever way it is exerciſed, upon the proper exerciſe of which depends the ſafety and welfare of thoſe who are ſubject to it, and who may enjoy many advantages under it, but cannot be ſaid to enjoy that liberty we mentioned, by which they are freed from all reſtraint, except what ariſes from fixed laws, conſented to and approved of by themſelves.

The origin of this liberty we endeavoured to trace in our laſt Eſſay, and to ſhew its agreeableneſs to that equality which Nature has originally eſtabliſhed among mankind, as alſo in what reſpect this has given any one a ſuperiority over another, and how far liberty is influenced without being ſubverted by it.

Our next inquiry therefore ſhall be, what influence Civil or Political Liberty has upon the moſt valuable intereſts and purſuits of mankind, ſuch as public peace and tranquillity, public ſpirit and reſolution, commerce, agriculture, learning, and, particularly, how religion and virtue are influenced and affected by it. To ſay that none of theſe are conſulted or favoured by any other kind of government but what is commonly called a free one, would be ſay-

ing too much; on the contrary it may be affirmed, that any form of government is far preferable to anarchy, or the being without any government at all; and that ſuch a Freedom as takes place among the wild Arabians or Indians, is deſtructive of all thoſe valuable intereſts we mentioned. Hiſtory and experience would likewiſe warrant our aſſerting, that ſome of the advantages or purſuits mentioned, ſeem to have been more favoured or promoted by ſuch eſtabliſhed forms of government as were leſs conſiſtent with Liberty, than by thoſe who had more of it: But the queſtion is, Which of them, upon the whole, does, in theſe reſpects, deſerve the preference?

Firſt, with reſpect to public *Peace* and tranquillity from within, as well as *Safety* from without, they do not ſeem to depend ſo much upon the form of any government, as upon the adminiſtration of it, and the regard had to ſuperior merit in thoſe to whom ſuch adminiſtration is committed, and who (let the form of government be what it will) cannot be fixed by immutable laws; for let the ſupreme authority be veſted in a few hands or in many, in a prince, a ſenate, or both, we generally find the burden of adminiſtration is devolved on others, whoſe offices make them dependent and reſponſible, as temporary miniſters

ſters or ſervants of the public; and ſo, far as theſe are poſſeſſed of that merit formerly ſpoken of, which ariſes from ſuperior talents, induſtry, and virtue, ſo far the public peace, ſafety, and tranquillity, will be ſecured under any form of government that prevails.

As to *public ſpirit* and reſolution, however, the caſe is ſomewhat different; for animating any public enterpriſe, and ſurmounting all the difficulties that may attend it, higher notions of liberty and property are neceſſary than can be found any where elſe but in free governments.

The ſame may be ſaid of *Commerce*: It is indeed never ſo honourable in monarchies, for they require a different ſubordination of ranks, and a regard to birth and titles of diſtinction: But, though abſolute monarchs may ſometimes encourage it by their protection, and even by their example; yet, as their protection can never equal that of eſtabliſhed laws, there will always be ſuch an apprehenſion and dread of its being withdrawn, as will damp the ſpirit of commerce; for till property be ſecured, there will be no great deſire of having it increaſed, unleſs by thoſe who expect to increaſe their power with it, ſo far as to render themſelves in ſome meaſure independent. This, with the blindneſs of avarice, are the only reaſons

that can be given for the rapaciouſneſs of ſome Turkiſh governours, whoſe riches have ſo often been their ruin. Even ſmall republics do not afford ſufficient ſecurity for encouraging the increaſe of property by commerce; nay their legiſlators (as in Sparta) have generally conſidered their poverty as of ſome conſequence to their ſafety. Powerful republics therefore, or governments of a mixed form, but rather inclining to the ſide of liberty, have been always found moſt favourable to commerce, as might be exemplified in the caſe of Tyre and Carthage of old, and that of Venice, Genoa, and the United Provinces, in our own times. The application as to Britain is obvious, and has rendered it the envy of foreigners, as it has raiſed it above all the commercial ſtates that ever exiſted.

All that has been obſerved of commerce, will hold as to *Manufactures* likewiſe; they go hand in hand, and are encouraged or depreſſed by the ſame cauſes.

As to *Agriculture*, there may be ſuppoſed ſome difference: Neceſſity will force ſome attention to it under many political diſadvantages; but it is plain that not only what promotes this neceſſity, but likewiſe whatever ſecures property, or favours the transferring of it, muſt likewiſe be favourable to agriculture, and conſequently to

Population,

Population, which is one of the greateſt ſupports of any ſtate, and yet generally very little attention given to promote it: What influence liberty has on it, may be judged of from comparing the little republic of St Marino, ſo populous for its extent and riches, with the fertile,but deſolate Campania of Rome. That ſlavery is an enemy to population, appears in the caſe of the Weſt Indian negroes; and even ſuch unbounded liberty, as that of the uncivilized Americans, has the ſame effect, becauſe it does not give that ſecurity and other aſſiſtance neceſſary to encourage induſtry; but whatever government moſt effectually does this, will be always the moſt friendly to population. What influence liberty has on learning, religion, and virtue, ſhall be afterwards conſidered.

ESSAY

ESSAY X.

On LIBERTY:—Its Influence on *Learning*, *Religion*, and *Virtue*, and its Corruptions into *Licentiouſneſs* and *Libertiniſm*.

Thurſday, March 6. 1766.

Dexterior tamen hic, qui liber non erit, illis
Quorum animas & ſarre ſuo cuſtodit & ære.
JUVEN.

He's more a Slave, who knows no ſelf-command,
Than thoſe who, fed and bought by him, his
purchaſe ſtand.

LEARNING is of more conſequence to the ſafety and happineſs of any nation, than is commonly imagined; it tends to enlarge the mind, and to humanize the manners; as might be exemplified in the caſe of thoſe nations or ages in which it has flouriſhed moſt; but our preſent enquiry is, How far *Liberty* has any influence upon it? The liberty of ſavages is an enemy to it, for ſome kind of government is neceſſary both for its protection and encouragement.

Deſpotic government induces a ſlaviſh dependence and timidity of ſpirit likewiſe unfriendly to learning: It loves to breathe the

the air of freedom, both civil and intellectual, this being beſt ſuited to the flights of fancy and ſpeculation, and from this the republic of letters had its name. There have been republics, however, in which learning made but little progreſs, and theſe have, as to moral and civil improvement, been always equally defective. A Carthaginian philoſopher was thought a prodigy; Carthaginian veracity and humanity were likewiſe in little repute.

A republic, merely commercial, may give ſome encouragement to mechanical arts, but very little to the liberal, and to ſciences much leſs, unleſs the neighbourhood of other ſtates, more attentive to works of genius, unconfined to preſent utility, raiſe that emulation which is one of the moſt powerful incentives to ſtudy, and which, as it has often occaſioned the appearance of many learned men at one period, is very much promoted by ſuch a free intercourſe as took place among the different ſtates in Greece of old, and thoſe of all Europe for ſome time paſt: When this intercourſe is interrupted by war, and little attention paid to literary productions, we ſee but few efforts of genius: *Silent inter arma togæ.*

Political liberty, perſonal ſecurity, and outward competency, are favourable to genius and literary improvement; ſlavery, dependence,

dependence, indigence, and affluence, are all more or leſs pernicious to them. But there is a philoſophical and critical liberty, which is here likewiſe of very great importance, as there is ſcarce any branch of learning and philoſophy that has not ſuffered by too ſlaviſh a ſubjection to eſtabliſhed ſyſtems and opinions, marring a free ſpirit of inquiry into truth.

The influence that *Liberty* has upon *Religion* and *Virtue*, ſhall conclude our preſent inquiry with reſpect to it. It is too common with political and moral writers to mention religion and virtue ſeparately, but in their proper meaning and extent they are inſeparable; and the ſame action, which, when performed from a religious principle or regard to the will of God, is reckoned religiouſly good, may, when a regard to our ſenſe of its intrinſic excellence or fitneſs is the motive, be called virtuous or morally good; when a regard to honour or character, rather than to conſcience or law, determines to it, it is ſpeciouſly good; and when fear or intereſt is the principle, it may be ſaid that it is politically good: But it is plain, that where the firſt of theſe principles operates, it muſt be the moſt uniform and invariable in all times, places, and circumſtances, (as depending leſs on the opinion or influence of others) and it is the want, weakneſs,

or abuſe of this, which has occaſioned the ſubſtituting other principles in its ſtead, even when they can have but a temporary effect without it.

Monteſquieu mentions fear as the principle of obedience in a deſpotic, honour in a monarchical, and virtue in a republican or free government; experience ſo far juſtifies this obſervation, that we may take it for granted, that civil liberty is favourable to virtue and likewiſe to religion; but force or tyranny (which is the exerciſe of power beyond right) an enemy to both; for their being voluntary, or the effect of free choice, is eſſential to them.

If, indeed, we could ſuppoſe any power upon earth, civil or eccleſiaſtical, to be infallible in its exerciſe and direction, it might be ſaid that the intereſts of religion and virtue would be beſt ſecured by an implicit ſubmiſſion to it; but, beſides the abſurdity of ſuch a ſuppoſition, even this ſubmiſſion would deſtroy or ſuperſede that exerciſe of our own will and judgment which is eſſential to theſe: It is the province of perſuaſive and not of coercive power to reſtrain or regulate the exerciſe of them, for the latter can never make a man alter his opinion, however much it may make him conceal or diſguiſe it; any attempt to ſupport it by argument, cannot be effectually oppoſed but

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by argument; and where the liberty of the preſs is allowed, it is equally free to both.

Nor can we well ſuppoſe the intereſts of true religion and virtue to ſuffer by this, or that upon the moſt free and public inquiry there will in the end be more converts to error than to truth, or indeed any converts to error who would not have been ſo without ſuch an inquiry; it is the ſuppreſſion, and not the permiſſion of this, which would be ſubverſive of religion and morality; but in caſes where theſe are not concerned, and where the reſtraints of conſcience can not be pleaded, their ſeeming indifference makes it eaſier for us to draw others over to our opinion, ſo that the propagation of it muſt be more dangerous if the caſe be ſuch as affects the fundamental principles and conſtitution of that ſociety, civil or eccleſiaſtic, to which we belong, by a tendency to withdraw ourſelves or others from the allegiance due to it, or to thoſe who lawfully exerciſe the ſupreme authority in it. Any attempt therefore to propagate opinions which have manifeſtly this tendency, will juſtify an outward reſtraint upon liberty, eſpecially if they are accompanied with ouvert acts of diſloyalty or diſobedience; and, tho' the other caſes mentioned do not ſeem to ſtand in need of a reſtraint of this kind from without, in matters of opinion alone, even when

when reckoned erroneous, yet it becomes neceſſary here likewiſe, if any practices follow that are irreligious or immoral, according to the degree in which the laws of God or ſociety are violated by them.

If all civil reſtraints upon *Liberty* are taken away, it degenerates into *Licentiouſneſs*; if all religious and moral reſtraints are removed, it takes the name of *Libertiniſm*; the former of theſe moſt commonly denotes the abuſe of liberty in nations or communities, and the latter that abuſe of it which has reſpect to individuals; but when they are carefully traced and compared, it will be found that they have a very great ſimilarity in their nature and progreſs, and that inſtead of being conducive to the improvement of civil or moral liberty, they are moſt certainly deſtructive of both.

By the freedom of any ſtate is commonly meant that of the people, or the inferior rank of ſubjects who enjoy any fixed property in it, not excepting even thoſe who have the ſmalleſt ſhare of this, but who claim the protection of the ſtate to their perſons and poſſeſſions, and contribute, according to their abilities, to its ſupport; nor is the liberty of thoſe who have power or authority over them excluded, but it is not thought to be ſo much in danger. It is not, however, from thoſe only who are

by argument; and where the liberty of the preſs is allowed, it is equally free to both.

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of ſuperior rank or authority, from the chief magiſtrates, monarchs, or nobles, that the liberty of the people is in danger; for, though the moſt common encroachments on it have been from that quarter, yet it has often ſuffered, not only from an increaſe of power in the governors, but likewiſe from a contempt of authority in thoſe who were governed; and who may be conſidered in two lights, either as a collective body, or through the medium of their repreſentatives.

In the beſt conſtituted governments, the power of legiſlation has been always lodged in the hands of ſuch repreſentatives, with concurrence of the higher orders in the ſtate; and where theſe are a proper balance to one another, and neither of them biaſſed by an opinion of ſeparate intereſt, nor overawed by ſuperior force, the liberty and intereſts of the people will be ſecured; but there is ſcarce an inſtance of legiſlative power lodged in the collective body of the people that has not been capriciouſly exerciſed and fatal to liberty, firſt by corrupting, or converting it into licentiouſneſs, and thereafter by ſacrificing it to uſurpation or tyranny.

Thus when Athens was a popular ſtate, and the legiſlative power lodged, not in repreſentatives, but in the collective body of the

the people, we ſee what extravagant licentiouſneſs they were led to; the death of Socrates and baniſhment of Ariſtides are clear evidences of this. Many ſuch evidences we have of the abuſe of liberty by the collective body of the Roman people, when the exorbitance of their power occaſioned their being courted and corrupted by their different leaders, who often introduced armed ſlaves and cunning ſeducers into their aſſemblies; and to ſome of theſe leaders, they generally made a ſacrifice of all that power and liberty which they ſeemed to hold ſo dear.

Such are the conſequences to ſtates, when, for want of the civil reſtraints neceſſary, liberty degenerates into licentiouſneſs, and the like conſequences to individuals, may be obſerved to enſue, when, for want of the moral reſtraints neceſſary, it degenerates into libertiniſm and profligacy. In ſtates or communities we ſee that this abuſe of liberty ariſes, from giving the mob a power which they are incapable to exerciſe: In the caſe of individuals, irregular appetites and paſſions may very juſtly be compared to the mob; if they are kept under the reſtraints of reaſon and conſcience, moral liberty is enjoyed in perfection; but, if theſe reſtraints be thrown off, it becomes the liberty of brutes, not of men, or rather it is ſhamefully reſigned, and the

meaneſt ſlavery choſen in preference to it: No wonder therefore if diſappointment ſhould follow as to that happineſs which ariſes from the proper exerciſe and enjoyment of moral liberty, or from that ſelf-command (as it may be called) which conſiſts in giving reaſon and conſcience the ſuperiority due to them.

Self-command is eſſentially neceſſary to inward or moral liberty, and it conſiſts, more generally, in giving reaſon the command of our thoughts, affections, and actions; but, more particularly, that ſelf-command neceſſary to happineſs and moral liberty, conſiſts in the proper regulation of our deſires, by proportioning them to the real value and importance of their objects, as they appear in the eye of reaſon, and not of fancy or paſſion.

The command of our deſires, in general, is what conſtitutes *Contentment:* The command of our appetites, or thoſe deſires in particular which have reſpect to the body, is *Temperance*; and the command of our averſions, *i. e.* reſolutely encountering thoſe calamities or ſufferings to which we have moſt averſion, when neceſſary for great and virtuous ends, is what the ancient moraliſts ſeem to have underſtood by the cardinal virtue of *Fortitude*; they alſo recommended moral averſion, as the firſt ſtep neceſſary in order to moral improvement, *i. e.* that

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we muſt begin with rooting out vicious habits before the foundation can be cleared for cultivating virtuous affections and diſpoſitions; that what enſlaves the mind muſt be removed before it can be free.

A very little experience will ſhew the juſtice of this obſervation; but what we would chiefly obſerve at preſent, is, the importance of vigorouſly maintaining that command or government of ourſelves which has reſpect to the various particulars now mentioned, if we would uſe our liberty in ſuch a way as is moſt conducive to our perfection and happineſs; and that whoever neglects this moral diſcipline and ſelf-government, is (as an elegant ſatyriſt obſerves in the motto of this eſſay) the unhappieſt of all ſlaves; he has not only one, but a thouſand capricious and tyrannical maſters, whom he carries continually about with him, and whoſe deſire of dominion is increaſed, inſtead of being ſatisfied, by every new ſacrifice of our liberty, or every new act of ſubmiſſion to their authority.

What has been advanced in this and the two preceeding eſſays, with reſpect to civil and moral liberty, would admit of much enlargement, particularly by conſidering how the increaſe or decay of the former is affected by the different conſtitutions of government that we have acceſs to be acquainted with; but this is a ſubject of political ra-

ther than of moral inquiry; and, though the firſt principles of *Politicks*, are a proper ſubject of every man's ſtudy and attention, ſo far as religion, virtue, and the advantages of ſocial life are influenced by them; yet, the more minute conſideration of them, by laying open the views and principles of the different parties they have given riſe to in every ſtate, is the proper taſk of ſtateſmen, and of coffee-houſe politicians, who aim at being their aſſociates; nor will any ſober dutiful ſubjects envy them this monopoly, or ſeek to have them deprived of it, while they ſeem to make a proper uſe of it for their common benefit. The *Remembrancer* in a particular manner diſclaims it, as being no part of that province which he has choſen for himſelf, at preſent, upon finding it unoccupied by others.

ESSAY

ESSAY XI.

Libertiniſm deſcribed; with the Hiſtory of JACK FREEMAN.

Thurſday, March 13. 1766.

——*Facilis eſt deſcenſus Averni;*
Noctes atque dies, patet atri janua Ditis:
At revocare gradum, ſuperaſque evadere ad auras:
Hoc opus, hic labor.——

VIRG.

" Smooth is the way to Pluto's gloomy Shade;
" And Hell's black gates for ever ſtand diſplay'd:
" But it's a Work of much Fatigue and Pain,
" To climb to theſe æthereal heights again.

PITT's VIRG.

IT is a very common and juſt obſervation, that a man, thoroughly vicious, is as rarely to be found, as one thoroughly virtuous; but it muſt not be ſuppoſed here, as in many other caſes, that the middle between theſe two extremes is the ſafeſt; for, if vice be a real evil, (which few I hope will deny) we need not be afraid to fly too far from it; nor indeed is there any middle point, at which we either do or can ſtop: The man who ſeeks not to become better, is moſt certainly growing worſe; if he is not advancing in virtue and religion, he

he muſt, in leſs or in more, be declining; the aſcent is ſo ſteep, that there is no ſtanding idle by the way, nor is it agreeable to the nature of man to be ſo; the moſt indolent that ever was, muſt think and act in ſome way or other, be it ever ſo trifling, hurtful, or hazardous.

Tho', therefore, the diſtribution of mankind, into virtuous and vicious, might be thought improper, if their being completely ſo was underſtood by it; yet they may very properly be divided into two claſſes, according to their aim and purſuit; the one of them ſtruggling more or leſs for maſtery, and the other ignobly declining the conteſt; the one gaining ſome ground, and the other gradually loſing it: Not that their progreſs towards either of the extremes mentioned, is always ſenſibly and immediately felt by themſelves, or perceived by others, more than the progreſs of their bodily ſtrength and ſtature in youth, or the decays of age; but in time it becomes perceptible; and tho', in this reſpect, the bulk of mankind ſeem to be in a quieſcent ſtate, ſcarcely moving one way or another, yet, ſome change they muſt, in reality, be undergoing, however ſmall, in reſpect of mind as well as of body; ſome motives they muſt have to virtue, nd incentives to vice, and by the influence which theſe have, more or leſs, on their

their actions and diſpoſitions, their progreſs is determined.

We are all, therefore, either advancing towards higher perfection, or gradually falling off; with this difference, that, in the former caſe, there muſt be many acts of ſelf-denial, many wrong habits to get rid of, many paſſions and appetites to reſtrain, which will make the way ſeem unpleaſant at the firſt entrance upon it, and in conſequence of every deviation from it; but this is abundantly compenſated, by that heart-felt joy and ſatisfaction which ariſe from the conſciouſneſs of making any progreſs; whereas, in the other caſe, there is leſs to do; the declivity of vice is eaſily deſcended, and, while corrupt habits and diſpoſitions are indulged, they will give leſs trouble for the preſent, however ruinous and ſhameful the conſequences: So that the Roman poet's beautiful deſcription of his hero's paſſage to the regions below, may with ſome propriety be applied here. I have therefore prefixed it to this Eſſay, and am led into theſe reflections, by what was ſuggeſted in the concluſion of my laſt, with reſpect to *Libertiniſm* or profligacy, a character which, in its utmoſt extent, is, I hope, rarely to be met with; for it implies a man's throwing off the reſtraint of all laws human and di-

vine,

vine, except what ariſes from the fear of certain and immediate puniſhment.

The compleat Libertine is one who lays down to himſelf no other rule of action but to gratify, without reſerve, every appetite or paſſion that happens to be uppermoſt for the time; to gratify the brutal part of his nature, without regard to thoſe principles by which it ſhould be regulated and controlled: Indeed a brute is a much more innocent and harmleſs animal, he has not thoſe ſuperior principles, for enabling him to accompliſh his lawleſs purpoſes, nor has he the abuſe of them to anſwer for; and, where forcible reſtraint is neceſſary, it may, as to him, be more eaſily practiſed, than it can be with reſpect to the rational brute, as he may be called, who has juſt reaſon enough to make him the more dangerous and criminal.

We have heard of ſome, indeed, who ſeemed to pay little regard to reaſon or conſcience, and yet a ſenſe of honour, and ſome regard to character, kept them within bounds, ſo far as to ſave appearances in the ſight of men; but the compleat Libertine, endeavours to lay aſide this reſtraint likewiſe; after becoming regardleſs of the judgment of his own conſcience, he becomes at length regardleſs of the judgment and opinion of others; he affects to be called

a man

a man of pleaſure; but, by the lawleſs and unbounded purſuit of it, his reliſh for true pleaſure is impaired, his purſuit and enjoyment of it are often prevented, and the very principles of humanity in a great meaſure extinguiſhed.

Such is the character of the compleat Libertine; and tho' it is to be hoped, there are but very few to whom it is entirely applicable, yet the approaches to it are not ſo uncommon, as they are dangerous and alarming.

JACK FREEMAN was the only ſon of an indulgent and opulent father, and born heir of a conſiderable eſtate, in right of his mother; their uncommon fondneſs for him in his infancy, was no further to be condemned, than as it laid a foundation for much unneceſſary diſquiet to themſelves, and became too violent and viſible, at an age when it might become hurtful to him: It is, indeed, difficult to fix the time when parental fondneſs ſhould, for this reaſon, be either moderated or concealed, further than that it becomes neceſſary, as ſoon as, from repeated acts, it appears, that wrong habits, are forming, or wilfully perſiſted in: But as the towardlineſs of ſome diſpoſitions makes indulgence leſs dangerous, and as the common partiality of parents inclines them to think that this is the caſe with thoſe children whom they

they fondly love; *Jack* had the misfortune to be one of thoſe, who was thought to be in no danger from ſuch indulgence, ſo that it was continued much longer than was ſafe and prudent. His infant charms were indeed almoſt irreſiſtible; but injudicious admiration begot a conſciouſneſs and high opinion of them, by which they were gradually leſſened; while an impatience of contradiction, and a deſire of contradicting others, ſeemed to increaſe with his years; ſo that at the age of eight, his mother dying, his father was eaſily prevailed upon to ſend him to a friend at a diſtance for his education, in hopes of its proceeding more ſucceſsfully, upon his being removed from thoſe, whoſe familiarity and fondneſs had made him in ſome meaſure ungovernable.

This change had, at firſt, the deſired effect; *Jack* was more ſtudious to pleaſe his new acquaintances, till he had once gained them; but this being attained, he became regardleſs of their advice and authority, further than that "he crept, like a ſnail, unwillingly to ſchool." His friend, who had the charge of him, being a man of buſineſs, was ſatisfied with recommending him to the care of his maſters, and, tho' he took ſome account of his proficiency in knowledge, he gave very little attention to the qualities of his heart.

Such

Such, indeed, was the quickneſs of *Jack*'s parts, that the acquiſition of knowledge was eaſy to him; but, eaſy as it was, he could ſcarcely be prevailed upon to allow time enough for it, from the diverſions he now began to have a reliſh for; thoſe of infancy and childhood, were exchanged for others a little more manly, and, an unbounded purſuit of them, led him to many little acts of diſhoneſty and inhumanity. His father became, at length, ſenſible, that it was proper to commit *Jack* to the care of a private tutor, who ſhould conſider him as his only charge, and have the authority and care of a parent, without any blind partiality in his favour. Such a tutor he got, when about the age of twelve, and one pretty well qualified for his office; but he ſoon found, that *Jack* had been too long his own maſter. For three years, however, he made uncommon progreſs in knowledge; but that vanity, and impatience of any reſtraint, which had been too much cheriſhed by the tutors of his early years, began to gather ſtrength as he approached to manhood, and came to know too much of the opulent and independent fortune that awaited him; his love of innocent diverſion, was ſucceeded by an unbounded love of pleaſure; and his reſtraint for ſome years paſt, which was rather too ſtrict after ſo much previous in-

dulgence, ſeemed to make his paſſions more ungovernable, when he came to have it more in his power to gratify them. This now became the caſe, by his being ſent to the univerſity without a tutor; it was his own deſire, and his father was ſo far impoſed upon by his late ſeeming regularity, as to yield to it; beſides that new connections ſeemed to have leſſened his fondneſs and anxiety about him.

When removed to the univerſity, *Jack* ſeemed at firſt to deliberate about his future regularity; but the pauſe was ſhort, and his reſolution appeared from the choice made of his companions. The moſt profligate and undeſerving, were the moſt forward to ſollicit his acquaintance; and, tho' he at firſt aſſociated himſelf with thoſe who were moſt regular among them, yet, before three terms were elapſed, he became initiated in all the academical myſteries of vice: Not that his academical attendance could be charged with this, for he made ſuch attendance very eaſy to himſelf; but ſome books of an irreligious and immoral tendency, inflamed his paſſions and polluted his imagination, while an immoderate fondneſs for thoſe faſhionable exerciſes, which, when properly regulated, are neceſſary for youth, had occaſioned his aſſociating with all who ſeemed to excel in theſe, however deſpicable otherwiſe

otherwiſe as to what adorns the mind and the manners.

The liberal ſupplies of money, which *Jack* could eaſily command, enabled him to diſtinguiſh himſelf among thoſe of this inferior claſs; and the enjoyment of this diſtinction, together with their ſubſerviency to his pleaſures, and imitation of his example, gradually corrupted that ſenſe of right and wrong, by which he had at firſt been in ſome meaſure reſtrained. It was long before his maſters would loſe their hopes of reclaiming him, and ſtill longer before they could reſolve upon informing his father; but a low intrigue, in which he was concerned, and which was likely to end in marriage, occaſioned, at length, Mr Freeman's being made acquainted with his ſon's miſconduct, and calling him to London to be under his own immediate tuition.

He was then about eighteen; and as he had ſome dependence on his father, while under age, was, for the other three years, kept under pretty ſtrict reſtraint. But this was ſoon thrown off, upon his coming to an independent fortune; and young Mr Freeman became again diſtinguiſhed among the debauchees and gamblers of the town. The company of ladies of character he gave up as too delicate for him, and that of men of virtue as inſipid to his taſte. It would

be tedious to relate his various nocturnal rambles and rencounters; further than that, by a few years of debauchery and diſſipation, his very features, as well as his ſentiments, ſeemed to be altered; that ſweetneſs and ſprightlineſs, which, in his younger years, had procured him too much indulgence to his faults, ſeemed to be changed into a gloomy diſſatisfaction with himſelf, and brutal inſenſibility of his injuries to others; faithleſs to his engagements, he made two low marriages in the courſe of ſix weeks, and, upon a diſcovery being made, and proſecution threatened, went over with one of his female companions to Hamburgh, where, friendleſs and forlorn, he firſt felt the grips of poverty: For want of regular remittances, he had recourſe to unlawful practices for ſupporting himſelf, and being ſoon taken up, ended his days in a jail.

The hiſtory of this young Libertine is ſo much the more remarkable, as he had ſome advantages, in point of education, beyond many others of that claſs; but there were few or no efforts on his own part to improve them; nor is it only what needs to be improved, that ought, in forming the minds of youth, to be attended to, but likewiſe what to be corrected and reſtrained, even in infancy and childhood; and when they

they are far advanced, the making this reſtraint, rather the effect of their own reaſon and choice, than of any outward influence, which cannot always be continued. An unbounded love of ſenſual pleaſure, is not ſo effectually reſtrained, by witholding the means of gratifying it, as by exciting and cheriſhing a taſte for pleaſure of a more refined nature, and leading to aſſociate with thoſe, who, by their example, rather than authority, may engage to the purſuit of it; from the pleaſures of ſenſe, the tranſition is eaſieſt at firſt to thoſe of the imagination; and when from this the mind riſes to a reliſh for the more ſublime delights of reaſon and religion, there will be little danger of purſuing pleaſure, by plunging with the Libertine into the mire of ſenſuality.

ESSAY XII.

The Art of TEACHING, both in a Literary and in a Familiar way, with an Example of it in Sophronius.

Thurſday, March 20. 1766.

Men muſt be taught, as if you taught them not;
And Things not known, propos'd as Things forgot.
POPE.

SOCRATES was pronounced, by the oracle of Delphos, the wiſeſt man among the Greeks, becauſe all the account he made of his own knowledge, was, *that he knew nothing;* he knew how little is to be known. The world is now upwards of two thouſand years older than it was in the days of this wiſe man, and yet many have the preſumption to doubt if mankind in general be much wiſer now than they were then; years, ſay they, bring experience, but years bring dotage; and may not ſuch an exuberance of knowledge, ſuch a multiplicity of ſtudies and inventions, as the world is now crowded with, contribute to this?

Leaving this point, however, to the deciſion of thoſe, whoſe knowledge of mankind, in all ages and nations, is extenſive enough to determine it; I ſhall only obſerve, that, were

were we to judge of the number of wiſe men now amongſt us, from the humble opinion they have of their own knowledge, we ſhould find few modeſt and ſelf-denied enough to be reputed truly wiſe; but, if we leave this method of judging to crafty oracles, and take the argument in a different light, we muſt undoubtedly conclude, that the world was never more wiſe than it is now, for it was never more unwilling to be taught: To pretend teaching any man his own buſineſs, or even to enter into any diſcuſſion of it before him, might be acknowledged to be ill breeding all the world over; were it not that every man knows ſo much of every thing, that he makes every man's buſineſs his own; and, if you ſeem to doubt his being maſter of it, he can eaſily reject you as an incompetent judge in the caſe.

Next to this unteachable humour, none perhaps is ſo prevalent as that of teaching others: Every capital ſtudy has its doctors; and in converſation, where no ſtudy is thought neceſſary, every man thinks himſelf at liberty to aſſume the office.—*Let ſuch teach others, who themſelves excel,* may be a tolerable good rule, and admitted by ſome as fair dealing; but thoſe who take upon them to teach, without ſuch excellence, may be juſtly complained of, as miſtaking their claſs, and taking upon them

to

to be maſters, when they ſhould be only ſcholars; or even allowing any to excel, it may be ſaid that this neither gives him a right to teach others, nor obliges them to ſubmit to his dictatorial authority.

For theſe reaſons it is, that a teacher muſt ſometimes (agreeably to the ingenious Poet's obſervation hereto prefixed) ſhelter himſelf under the name of a rambler, an idler, or perhaps a remembrancer, and propoſe things unknown, as if they were only things forgot: The world is now, however, ſo quick-ſighted in ſeeing through theſe diſguiſes, that it would not be ſafe to truſt entirely to any of them for protection; ſo that whoever finds himſelf prompted either by vanity, ſpleen, or zeal for the welfare of others, to promote their inſtruction and reformation, would do well to attend to the following ſhort and neceſſary cautions.

Firſt, let him make himſelf as independent as poſſible of thoſe whom he means to teach. Independence, either from without or from within, is neceſſary, but it muſt not degenerate into arrogance or inſolence. Diſintereſted benevolence (ſo juſtly celebrated by moraliſts) is likewiſe here particularly neceſſary, that the teacher may have ſome reward from the conſciouſneſs of his meaning well, whatever may be the ſucceſs or reception of his labours.

Another

Another way, in which he ſhould endeavour to indemnify himſelf, if he complains of the unteachableneſs or ingratitude of others, is, to benefit by his own precepts, or to reduce them to practice himſelf; a precaution highly neceſſary, both for his own ſake and theirs: But as a very ſlight miſcarriage, or inattention in this way, may diſcredit his inſtructions, there is one other precaution, which ſome have found convenient, and that is, the keeping themſelves, as much as poſſible, unknown to thoſe over whom they would wiſh to preſerve the authority of their precepts, and whoſe reverence for them may be endangered by too much acquaintance and familiarity.

Solomon obſerves, that *a little folly will ſerve to diſcredit him who is in reputation for wiſdom*; and ſo deſirous are we to reduce others to our own level, if not below it, that any elevation of a man's character ſeems to ſet up a magnifying glaſs for viewing his follies and his faults: For the ſame reaſon, therefore, that the antient Eaſtern monarchs avoided being ſeen in public, his ſpectatorial Majeſty concealed himſelf, under the maſk of a ſhort phiz, when he took upon him to inſtruct the public; and whoever aſpire to the dignity of doctors, in any branch of ſcience, would do well to have ſome ſuch maſks prepared for their future

future concealment: The invention and proper diſtribution of theſe might afford ſome exerciſe of their ingenuity; but hitherto ſo little has appeared of it, that they ſeem to be all ſatisfied with putting on the ſame maſk of ſolemnity and reſerve, how ſoon ever this dignity is obtained; as if the firſt thing neceſſary, upon commencing a profeſſed teacher, was ſilence; in like manner as it is often one of the firſt privileges claimed by the metropolitan, to be excuſed from preaching.

But leaving all theſe dignified teachers to take their own way, what deſerves the particular attention of ſociety is, the familiar art of teaching in converſation, or gaining others over to our ſentiments; neither loquacity nor vociferation alone will do the buſineſs, and yet ſome degree of theſe are often neceſſary: To underſtand well the ſubject in diſpute, and the preciſe point on which it turns, ſhould be the firſt endeavour of any who aim at excelling in this way; a command of words and of temper muſt be added, and, along with theſe, ſuch an appearance of impartiality, as may remove all ſuſpicion of any other deſign than the diſcovery and ſupport of truth: But all theſe qualifications together, will not make up for any affectation of ſuperiority over thoſe who are to be informed and convinced;

ced; ſo that the more there appears to be any title to this, there muſt be the more of modeſty, in utterly diſclaiming it, and eſpecially if there is the leaſt inſinuation of any thing, in the way of reproof or admonition, to be thus conveyed; for nothing has more the appearance of this hated ſuperiority in others, than their pretending to admoniſh or reprove us; and the more there is a conſciouſneſs of its being merited, it will generally be the more unacceptable and provoking.

SOPHRONIUS is one of thoſe, whoſe addreſs and ſucceſs in the familiar way of communicating inſtruction, I have always particularly admired. After a large circle in a coffee-houſe has been long kept in ſuſpence, and unable to determine as to the merits of two diſputants, I have heard *Sophronius* hit ſo exactly the preciſe point on which the debate turned, that with a few words he put an end to it. When Quintilian obſerves, as a diſtinguiſhing character of Cicero's orations, that they were ſo full that nothing could be added to them; he at the ſame time obſerves as to thoſe of Demoſthenes, that nothing could be taken from them; that he had words enough, and no more: This is what may, with juſtice, be ſaid of *Sophronius*; he can be either copious and fluent as Cicero, or conciſe and thundering

dering as Demoſthenes; but his common rule is, to uſe no more words, on any occaſion, than are neceſſary; and as his ideas are clear, his expreſſions are ſo likewiſe; neither the one nor the other are obſcured by theſe miſts of paſſion with which colloquial diſputants are ſo often enveloped, and by which their meaning is often hid from themſelves and from others.

Sophronius, on the contrary, by commanding his own temper, commands the attention, and even the conviction, of his hearers: Slave to no ſect, bigotted by no party, he allows every one's arguments their proper weight, and commonly recapitulates thoſe in the oppoſition to him, before his own opinion is declared; when he does declare it, it is with becoming modeſty, and with all proper allowances for thoſe who differ from him; when the caſe is dubious, he does not pretend to be deciſive; when it is myſterious, he is ſilent; and when it appears trivial, he makes uſe of raillery and good humour, without any airs of ſolemnity in diſcuſſing it; but he never repreſents that as trivial, which is in itſelf important, in reſpect of the private or public intereſts of others; and tho' his opinion is never given with any dogmatical arrogance, there appears in his way of delivering it, a conſciouſneſs of his ability to ſupport it; this

conſciouſneſs

conſciouſneſs is generally known to be ſo well founded, that he often gains aſſent before his arguments are produced: He never uſes a ſimile, in the place of an argument; and when improperly uſed by others, he often puſhes it to an abſurdity: His wit indeed might be dreaded, if accompanied with ill-nature; but he never fails to employ it in defence of oppreſſed modeſty and merit.

The art of conveying reproof, *Sophronius* is particularly happy in; he is unwilling to undertake it, and is as general and ſecret with it as poſſible, while this ſeems to be ſufficient; but when it is neceſſary to be more open and particular, he makes it evident that paſſion or intereſt are not his incitements to it, and endeavours to make his affection and regard unqueſtionable, before he communicates his reproof. He often begins with an acknowledgment of ſomething faulty in himſelf, or with reproving thoſe whom he can uſe moſt freedom with, for the benefit of others, to whom ſuch freedom might be unacceptable: I have known him to correct vice, by commending the contrary virtue; to bring about the performance of a good action, by only ſuppoſing it to have been done; and to cheriſh a good diſpoſition, by a commendation of it in thoſe who had, indeed, ſome, but no

great pretenſions to it. He brought a young gentleman to abſtain from ſwearing, by a genteel compliment upon his being believed without it; and another from dealing too much in the marvellous, by a hint that if any other had ſaid it he would not be believed: Tho', only a by-ſtander, he once put a ſtop to the ſucceſs of a very plauſible gameſter at Tunbridge, by gravely telling him that he had forgot to replace the cards, after being cut; the gentleman thanked him, but was from that time diſappointed of ſome of the matadores, which he uſed dexterouſly to convey into his own hand when he dealt.

Sophronius is remarkably careful to avoid argumentation with the fair ſex. Pope has told us, that men are to be taught, as if you taught them not: How women are to be taught, he ſays not, but ſeems rather at a loſs what character to give them, or in what predicament to place them; the honour of this diſcovery was reſerved for Sophronius: For teaching the ladies, he ſubmits to be taught by them; and has the art of making them follow, by giving them the lead; that is, he makes every thing come of themſelves; he brought Miſs *Ogle* to behave tolerably at church, by employing her to reprove others for their miſbehaviour; and made *Emilia* deſpiſe Mr *Flippant*, by engaging

ging her in an argument with him about taſte; his own eſteem and affection were long fixed on the incomparable *Lucinda*; but, before he made propoſals to her, ſhe was upon the point of employing another to perſuade him to make them.

The improvement of the Ladies, even in ſolid knowledge, *Sophronius* is far from making light of, but conſiders it as of importance, both to themſelves and their admirers; he not only employs his own literary talents for this purpoſe, but is likewiſe at pains to point out what moſt deſerves their notice in the compoſitions of others; what tends to correct the fancy, to regulate the paſſions, and improve the heart; not forgetting whatever is neceſſary to qualify for domeſtic life. Miſs *Sparkle* will ever conſider herſelf as indebted to him for his remarks on the *Fair Penitent*; Lady *Brilliant* might likewiſe have had more reaſon to thank him, had his literary favours been accepted, and another gem added to brighten the luſtre of her character.

Tho' *Sophronius* chuſes rather to be humorous, than over-ſerious in his arguments with the ladies, yet he endeavours often to introduce them both as hearers and judges of his reaſonings with others; the uprightneſs of his intentions generally procures

him a favourable hearing; and tho' he may ſometimes fail of ſucceſs, yet he always endeavours to deſerve it.

ESSAY XIII.

On the LOVE of VARIETY,—Its *Prevalence*, *Uſe*, and *Abuſe*.

Thurſday, March 27. 1766.

Mille hominum ſpecies, & rerum diſcolor uſus.
Velle ſuum cuique eſt, nec voto vivitur uno.

PERSIUS.

"Thro' all the kind, thro' Nature's numerous ſons,
"Look; and you'll ſee no general impulſe runs:
"A different biaſs in each breaſt you trace;
"You find the brain as various as the face."

BRUCE.

THE LOVE of VARIETY is a moſt univerſal paſſion, inſenſible oft times in its operations, but important in its conſequences; it is not indeed the ſubject I have now chiefly in my view, but it is what very much engages me to depart from my laſt; and as I have once begun with it, by way

way of preamble, it may poſſibly draw more attention, than was at firſt propoſed.

I am no ſlave to my appetites, (ſays EPULUS) but I own that variety pleaſes me, in every kind of entertainment. Let phyſicians and philoſophers ſay what they will, we may hold by their practice, in defiance of their precepts. I'll venture to ſay of my taſte, that it becomes every day more general, and even our once abſtemious neighbours of North Britain begin to conform to it; I now think well of them, and hope they will always continue to deſpiſe the homely ſimplicity of their anceſtors.

Delightful variety! (cries FLIRTILLA) how inſipid would life be without a change of diverſions! We may judge of this, adds ſhe, from finding how heavily we paſs our Sundays; when, with a view, I ſuppoſe, to make us think once a week, theſe harmleſs amuſements are cruelly denied us. Mrs *Meanwell* tells me, it is always Sunday in heaven; but of this I pretend not to have any conception; and even ſhe herſelf has her taſte for variety, elſe Mr *Frigid*'s diſcourſes would be always enough for her, without wandering after other preachers, not near ſo handſome.

AQUARIUS is another, who is often heard declaiming on the ſame ſubject; he can tell you the various ways of living, at all

the noted medicinal ſprings in Europe; to thoſe of Britain, his own experience extends, and he can calculate, to a fraction, the expence of each. BATH is his head quarters; but though he cannot ſay his health is bad, yet the deſire of making it better has driven him, for variety, from Bath to Tunbridge, Scarsborough, and the whole round of the watery element. His longeſt pauſe was on the banks of the Tweed; but, for the ſake of variety, he ventured far to the north of it, and returned with encomiums on Scotch heroiſm and hoſpitality. He is now meditating an excurſion to the continent, ſtill in ſearch of variety, without changing his element.

But, to be a little more ſerious, it muſt be owned, that the *Love of Variety* is ſo prevalent and inſinuating, as to make ſome attention neceſſary to the regulation of it. The ſpeculative man would need to beware of it, in puſhing his reſearches from one ſtudy to another; and the active projector, who muſt give it more indulgence, would do well to watch over its deſultory machinations. It introduces new ſyſtems, in law, phyſic, and politics, almoſt with every new century, when no juſt reaſon can be aſſigned why the old ones are exploded. In the more ſublime ſtudies of divinity and morality, it might indeed be thought, that there would

would be leſs danger of ſuch changes; and yet even here it has no ſmall influence; new opinions and controverſies ariſe, new corruptions and abuſes creep in, which cannot be well accounted for otherwiſe. As to this we muſt further obſerve, that thoſe who addreſs themſelves to the paſſions, even for the inſtruction of others, would do well to have regard to this paſſion for variety. Let the ſame inſtructions be often repeated, with the ſame cadence of voice, or monotony, and we ſhall find that even their importance will not be ſufficient to command attention. Neither a ſupplicant nor an orator can thus uniformly proceed, without a ſenſibility diverſified according to the difference of caſes; and hence it is that a lively and ready elocution has ſo much advantage over the moſt elaborate but formal declamations.

The love of variety has been always remarked, as having particular influence on our ſearch after happineſs; but this is chiefly to be underſtood of that happineſs, which has reſpect to external and ſenſible enjoyments; if theſe are not diverſified, it occaſions a ſatiety, which can only be prevented by the change or interruption of them: Even moderate pain is, in ſome meaſure, compenſated by the pleaſure that is felt on its being removed. The man who

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was never ſick, ſcarcely knows the value or true enjoyment of health; and the man who never underwent much bodily fatigue, knows not the exquiſite pleaſure of reſt after it. Thus the ſhort abſence of a friend, makes his company the more deſirable; and a ſhort retirement to the country, heightens the pleaſures of the town.

That condition of life cannot indeed be aſſigned, for which we could long have a reliſh without variety; was I to moralize upon this, I would ſay, that it argues both the activity of the human mind, and the vanity of all human things. In this, and every branch of the mental œconomy, evidences of wiſdom and deſign are manifeſt; our preſent ſtate is an imperfect one, but the powers now given us, and the principles implanted in us, are ſuch as, when properly exerciſed, lead to higher perfection; whatever ſtrength reaſon may hereafter acquire, it is plain that at preſent it is too weak for exciting to action, when there are many difficulties in the way; paſſions are therefore given as its auxiliaries, they magnify the importance of objects, and quicken all our active powers in the purſuit of them; reaſon diſcovers what objects are good or evil, but paſſion makes their good or evil more intereſting to us; "Reaſon is the "card, but Paſſion is the gale."

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To promote, therefore, that activity which is neceſſary to improvement, is the proper end and office of paſſion, as well as to add to our enjoyment on attaining the good, or averting the evil which it has reſpect to: That *Love* of *Variety*, which we are now ſpeaking of, is particularly conducive to thoſe ends; and, like our other paſſions, it is virtuous or vicious according to the degree in which it contributes to promote them.

As all our paſſions have a dependence on *Fancy*, the love of variety is particularly influenced by it. Our preſent ſtate is a mixed one, partaking both of what is ſpiritual and of what is ſenſible; though reaſon therefore ſhould be the ruling principle, it is not the only one at preſent implanted in us; to be guided by reaſon alone, our nature muſt have been made to approach nearer to that of ſpirits; the perfection of reaſon is reſerved, for a region of pure intelligence; this is its preſent aim, but not its attainment; and fancy, purified and corrected, will always co-operate with it. Were we to diſtinguiſh nicely here, we might ſay, that *Uniformity* is the child of reaſon, and *Variety* the creature of fancy; but it is not my preſent intention to proſecute the ſubject in this philoſophical light, further than is neceſſary to ſhew the uſefulneſs and importance of that principle, which we are

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now conſidering, when it is properly regulated, both for exciting to action, and for heightening enjoyment.

For regulating this, or any other paſſion, we muſt attend not only to the uſe, but likewiſe to the abuſe of it; and the love of variety may be ſaid to be abuſed, when it degenerates into a *Love* of *Change* and of *Novelty*. An immoderate love of change, takes from the reliſh of what we enjoy, much more than it adds to what we expect, though, for attaining this, it often precipitates into the uſe of ſuch means as are neither proper nor juſtifiable. The love of novelty is nearly allied to this, and may, in a moderate degree, be uſeful; but when carried too far, it has the ſame bad effects that were now mentioned, and prevents that ſettlement of mind which is always neceſſary, both for our improvement and our comfort.

The *Paſſion* for *Gaming* may, in ſome ſenſe, be conſidered as another corruption of the love of variety; from this indeed it may in ſome meaſure take its riſe, as in all games of hazard the variety is unlimited; but if this alone was the ſource of it, the paſſion might be gratified, with very little expence; for the value of the ſtake adds not to the variety of the game; if this alone was the ſource, it would likewiſe be more

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eaſily governed, and yield ſooner to the influence of principles that are more important.

We might therefore name two or three other ſources, that come in aid of this, and by which the paſſion for gaming is either occaſioned or heightened. One of theſe is *Idleneſs* and vacuity of thought, which leaves the mind open to every trivial intruder. Another is, the *Fear* of ſuch thoughts as might diſturb us; for the ſuppreſſion of which, recourſe is often had to game. And, if we narrowly examine, it will probably be found, that *Avarice* has often ſome influence in exciting to it; not to mention how many become enſlaved to it, merely from the influence of faſhion and example.

The influence of *Faſhion*, and the various changes introduced by it, may in ſome meaſure be accounted for, from what has been ſuggeſted. Faſhion extends not only to dreſs and equipage, but to all that may be called rather the conveniencies than the neceſſaries of life, and to thoſe modes of behaviour, which may be conſidered as ornamental to it, rather than to thoſe duties which are eſſential and immutable. Whatever is regulated by imagination and opinion, is the proper object of faſhion, and not what comes under the cognizance of reaſon and judgment. In this ſenſe it may be ſaid, that

that there is no nation ſo ſavage, as not to have ſome regard to faſhion, however abſurd that of one may appear to another, and even to thoſe of the ſame nation at a different period. Where, therefore, neither intereſt nor convenience are concerned, the only way in which we can account for the introduction of new faſhions, is, by aſcribing them to the love of variety, of change, or of novelty, always ready to operate when the opinion or example of others appear to juſtify it; but, were we to ſuppoſe a nation, having no intercourſe with others, this love of variety would have leſs aſſiſtance, and there would be fewer changes of faſhion, except what took their riſe from intereſt, expediency, or policy.

Our obſervations with reſpect to faſhion, and how far the love of variety influences it, might be confirmed by many examples, if neceſſary; but there appears ſo little neceſſity for this, that we may proceed to take notice of one other particular already hinted at, and all along in our view, but which, after being ſo long in preliminaries, cannot now be diſcuſſed, further than that it ſeems eaſily deducible from the whole of our inquiry; and that is, that the love of variety, which ſo generally predominates, proves all human things to be vain and unſatisfying. The ſcene may indeed be often ſhifted, and one vanity ſupplant another; but

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it ſeems none of them are commenſurate to the deſires of the human heart, and whoever would confine it to theſe, is left to find himſelf diſappointed. The man of pleaſure may take the whole round of it for variety; he will find that it laſts no longer than the appetite, and that it cannot be heightened without ſome previous pain to be removed; beſides that this round is far from being unlimited, and, as the pleaſure of variety is leſſened by repetition, the choice of objects will become ſtill more difficult, the leſs that there is of this variety to determine it. The different purſuits of knowledge, fame, power, and riches, when varied in the ſame manner for gratifying deſire, prove only that the objects purſued are vain and incommenſurate to it, and that to regulate or conquer deſire, is generally eaſier and ſafer than to gratify it.

ESSAY XIV.

On the Variety of HUMAN CHARACTERS, and Concluſion from it.

Thurſday, April 3. 1766.

Quo teneam vultus mutantem Protea nodo? HOR.

——————" What Chains can bind
" Theſe various Forms; this Proteus of the Mind?"
FRANCIS.

THE anſwer given by *Hamlet* Prince of Denmark to his mother, when expoſtulating with him about his *ſeeming* melancholy, deſerves ſome attention in a moral as well as critical view of it. " Seems, " Madam, (he replies) nay it is, I know not " ſeems." The admired Shakeſpear could not better expreſs, in a few words, that plain but ſullen dignity of ſentiment, which is ſuited to the character maintained by the hero of this dramatic performance. The reaſon, however, of my taking notice of this paſſage at preſent, is not merely to point out its propriety, ſo far as either Hamlet's character, or Shakeſpear's, is concerned; but rather, in order to extend the obſervation to mankind in general, by conſidering the variety of their characters real and aſſumed.

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An antient moraliſt has obſerved, that every man has two characters; the firſt a general one, common to him with all others, and the ſecond particular, diſtinguiſhing him from them; in like manner as there is a bodily ſhape and ſtructure common to all men, and yet a diverſity of features and complexion by which one is diſtinguiſhed from another. This hint may enable us to determine, wherein that *knowledge* of *mankind* conſiſts, which is juſtly conſidered as of great importance in life, and by the imagined attainment of which, ſome comfort themſelves amidſt the neglect of other valuable acquiſitions: We have not minded books or buſineſs, (they will tell you) we have loſt ſome time and money; but we have this advantage above many others, that we have got more experience, and acquaintance with the world.

To *know Mankind*, or to *know* the *World*, is an expreſſion of various and ſometimes equivocal import; cunning, ſuſpicion, and even the being initiated in the vicious practices of the world, ſome conſider as implied in it. This is a knowledge of the world, very little to be deſired; but, that ſagacity and prudence, experience and common-ſenſe, are all here implied, is undeniable; the application of all theſe therefore, or to inveſtigate the object, about which they are,

in this caſe, to be exerciſed, is one great ſtep to the attainment of the knowledge in queſtion.

Know thyſelf, and *reverence thyſelf*, were, and always will be conſidered, as precepts of the higheſt moral importance; without a man's having this knowledge of his own character, he will be ill qualified to acquire a juſt knowledge of others, or to improve it for the moſt valuable purpoſes of life: But the knowledge of *others*, is, no doubt, chiefly meant, when we ſpeak of knowing mankind, or of knowing the world, and the knowledge, either of ourſelves or of others, requires much more than our knowing that general character mentioned, in which we all agree; it conſiſts chiefly in a nice diſcernment of that individuating character, by which any man is diſtinguiſhed from every one living of the ſame ſpecies; a diſcernment of thoſe paſſions, affections, and diſpoſitions, which naturally predominate moſt with him, the habits he has acquired, the ends he has moſt in view, and the motives that generally influence his conduct. A juſt knowledge of theſe will enable us, in many caſes, to foretell what part he will act in the different circumſtances that occur; and, by an induction and compariſon of various caſes, we may, from our acquaintance with individuals, riſe to the knowledge of the world,

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ſo as to lay down to ourſelves proper maxims of conduct, in the common intercourſe and offices of life; this is a good foundation for ſome higher advances in this ſcience of human life, which remain to be conſidered.

If no more was neceſſary to the knowledge of men, but a knowledge of thoſe general and particular characters mentioned as applicable to them, and fixed either by nature itſelf, or by habit and cuſtom, (which is called a ſecond nature) ſuch knowledge would not be ſo very difficult to be acquired; what makes it difficult therefore is, that, beſides theſe two characters, almoſt every man has a third or adventitious character, which is not thus fixed and determined, but may be called accidental and aſſumed. So far as it is accidental and temporary, it depends upon variable principles and motives, and goes commonly by the names of humour and caprice: and, ſo far as it is aſſumed, rather than real, it has reſpect to qualities, which a man labours not ſo much to have in reality, as to be thought poſſeſt of, and goes commonly by the names of affectation and hypocriſy.

That acquaintance with mankind, which conſiſts in the knowledge of every man's particular humour and caprice, with whom

we have any intercourſe, is ſcarcely poſſible to be compleatly acquired, nor does it indeed deſerve to be much the object, of attention, but rather, of times of amuſement, unleſs ſo far as it has reſpect to thoſe whoſe reſolutions and purſuits are particularly intereſting, but whoſe caprices we ſhould beware of admiring or imitating. To ſay that equanimity or equality of temper is the attainment of none, would be ſaying too much, for it would diſcourage our aiming at what contributes unſpeakably to our own happineſs and that of others; beſides that, it is certain that reaſon and religion have often done a great deal in the way of rectifying, compoſing, and eſtabliſhing the mind, ſo as to give ſome ſteadineſs and equality amidſt that variety of humour to which we are all more or leſs ſubject. A conſtitutional coolneſs, indeed, (tho' no virtue) gives great advantage; but tho' ſome have naturally more of ſedateneſs and compoſure than others, or, at leaſt, are not affected by the ſame objects, yet their emotions are ſtronger if once they are agitated; and by other objects, or, in other circumſtances, there may be changes of humour to which they are liable. It is the general perſuaſion we have of this changeableneſs, in reſpect of character, or rather humour, which makes much dependence on others to be ſo

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generally dreaded; and indeed a ſubjection of this kind, is, to a generous mind, of all ſlaveries the moſt unſupportable. This perſuaſion, however, of our common liableneſs to ſuch changes, ſhould be always conſidered as a reaſon for mutual forbearance and for humility.

It is ſcarce poſſible for one man to differ more from another, in reſpect of humour, than he ſometimes does from himſelf. The man whom in health you have admired for good humour, becomes often, in ſickneſs, peeviſh and diſcontented. The man who by wealth and honour is diſtinguiſhed, betrays a conſciouſneſs of independence and ſuperiority; but let poverty and ignominy make their approach, his ſpirits droop, his colours languiſh. Here, indeed, we cannot help obſerving, that our ideas of poverty and ignominy are too often falſely aſſociated. This is ſo much and ſo often the caſe, that many would almoſt rather undergo flames and tortures, than make that confeſſion of their indigence, which the haughtineſs of wealth demands, in compenſation for its ſupplies; and our opinon of ourſelves is ſo much influenced by the opinion which we think others have of us, that the man who, from any eminence of ſtation, falls, like Beliſarius, into adverſe and depreſſed circumſtances, even without any imputation

putation upon his integrity or innocence, muſt have more than ordinary fortitude to avoid a conſequent depreſſion of ſpirit, and ſeeming diverſity of character; we have, however, without going back to the ancient ſages, inſtances enough of theſe diſtreſſes being ſurmounted, and an equality of temper and character here preſerved, as well as amidſt the changes from health to bodily ſickneſs and pain, formerly taken notice of. The influence of *Chriſtianity* has often remarkably appeared, by ſupporting the mind in ſuch caſes, and rendering it ſuperior not only to the pleaſures but likewiſe to the pains and calamities of life: There have alſo been inſtances even of philoſophy's having no ſmall effect in this way, by giving a noble contempt of all outward things; but, that its efficacy was always far ſhort of what ſome aſcribe to it, may be concluded from the refined ridicule of the Roman Satyriſt, in the end of that epiſtle from which we have taken our motto; where, after magnifying the happineſs and perfection of a wiſe man, he humorouſly concludes with obſerving, that all this may be marred by a little *Phlegm* in his breaſt, "*quum Pituita* "*moleſta eſt*;" and indeed, tho' it may be affirmed that true happineſs is independent on outward circumſtances, yet with reſpect to exerciſes of genius, it muſt be owned, that in order to their being properly animated,

mated, a certain eaſe and diſengagement are neceſſary, not very conſiſtent either with diſtreſs of body, or anxiety of mind.

We might mention many other caſes in which men are often ſeen to differ from themſelves, and to depart from their general character, according as their humour is affected by outward circumſtances, by their being hurried or at leiſure, weary or refreſhed, hungry or ſatisfied, and the like; but we haſten to take ſome notice of that character which is only *ſeeming* and not real, *i. e.* that which many endeavour to maintain in the opinion of others, rather than labour to acquire the qualities which it conſiſts of. It is a juſt judgment on the hypocrite, for undervaluing ſincerity, that he is led to proſecute his meaſures in a way more unſucceſsful; for his real character cannot long be concealed, by any means he may uſe to diſguiſe it. What is thus obſerved with reſpect to *Hypocriſy*, will likewiſe hold as to what we call *Affectation*; the former has reſpect to qualities which we ought to be poſſeſſed of, and the latter to ſuch as we may want without detriment; their common aim is to pleaſe others, but they would do it by appearances rather than reality; by ſollicitude to pleaſe, they counteract their own purpoſe; and their *ſeeming* to poſſeſs the good opinion of others, reconciles them to the want of what juſtly

deſerves

deſerves it. This fooliſh conceit is by ſome carried ſo far, that it nearly affects their purſuit after happineſs; that others think them happy ſeems more their deſire, than to ſtudy what really contributes to make them ſo.

From the *Variety* apparent in human characters the ſame concluſion may be drawn, as from the variety of human purſuits in our laſt Eſſay; and that is, that *Vanity* is their common characteriſtick. He alone is unchangeable who is ſupreme in perfection, and on him we muſt depend for permanent Bleſſedneſs.

We find it remarked by an inſpired Prince, with inimitable propriety, as a diſtinguiſhing ingredient of the good man's character, that "He is not afraid of evil tidings, his heart is fixed truſting in the Lord;" a firm reliance on the ALMIGHTY, is the anchor of the ſoul, amidſt the ebbings and flowings of worldly comforts. When therefore we contemplate the changes to which outward things are liable, let us ſtudy a diſengagement from their enſnaring influence, by keeping our hearts devoted to him who formed them, and whoſe various outward addreſſes to ſenſe are deſigned to promote the improvement of the heart. Whether he buries the earth in the ſnows of winter, or revives it again with the opening ſpring; whether he ſpeaks to the eye in all the

the beautiful and more ſtupendous proſpects of nature, or alarms the ear with the thunder of contending elements, it is to prepare his way into the hearts of men, and lead them to himſelf for *ſtability* of enjoyment.

Thro' various Channels to addreſs the Soul,
And teach the varying Climes from Pole to Pole.

That vanity and variety, to which all human ſchemes are liable, muſt now put a period to the labours of the REMEMBRANCER; indiſpoſition and other circumſtances, not important to the public, make their regular continuance any longer impracticable; but if the renewing them occaſionally ſhould happen to be neceſſary, his admonitions ſhall be tranſmitted from another quarter. When *Lycurgus* was departing, after giving laws to the Spartans, he took their oath of obedience to them till his return; a return which he reſolved was never to happen; but reſolutions and engagements are here inexpedient. If time ſhall impair the *Memory* of his countrymen, it may poſſibly be refreſhed by the REMEMBRANCER *Redivivus* *.

ESSAY

* Several ſubjects of importance that were in view, and could not be overtaken, nor comprized in the *Weekly Eſſays*, are largely treated of in the *Diſſertations* ſubjoined to them, but never before publiſhed.

ESSAY XV.

A LETTER from LORD B-L-NG--KE, to Meſſ. *V--t--e*, *H—e*, and *R-ſſ-au*.

Inter
Hectora Priamidem, animoſum atque inter Achillem,
Ira fuit capitalis, ut ultima divideret mors,
Non aliam ob cauſam, niſi quod virtus in utroque
Summa fuit. HOR.

"Prince Hector and Achilles bold,
"Were doughty champions, fam'd of old;
"A deadly feud their wrath proclaims,
"For both were valorous in extremes."

To the REMEMBRANCER.

SIR, *Nov.* 1. 1766.

THOUGH it has been always my opinion, that friends ſhould make up their differences, quietly between themſelves, and that they ſeldom gain much by expoſing one another to the public, eſpecially when their private correſpondence comes to be laid open; yet, when this happens to be done, in ſuch a manner as contributes to the public amuſement, I cannot help ſharing in it; and, as I reckon myſelf very much indebted, on this account, to two late diſputants *, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves

* See the late printed account of the diſpute between Meſſ. *H-me* and *R-ſſ au*, in which it muſt be owned that the former has behaved moſt heroically of the two, and deſerves to be celebrated accordingly, when the affair comes to be exhibited on the new theatre in the Hay market.

ſelves in the literary world, I think it would be a piece of ingratitude and injuſtice to them to ſuppreſs the following *letter* *, which their modeſty, I ſuppoſe, prevents their communicating in the courſe of their ingenious and edifying correſpondence; but which, coming from a perſonage of uncommon rank and merit, muſt do no ſmall honour to thoſe to whom it is wrote; and, as your being thought to have their confidence, may be a mean of recommending your over-ſerious lucubrations to their numerous

* This letter was intended for publication at a time when it would have been more *a propos* than at preſent, an abridgement of it having been ſent to the publiſher of the London Chronicle, when the public was entertained with the differences between Meſſrs H—e and R—ſſ—u; but a groundleſs fear of diſobliging the former, who was then uſefully and honourably employed in an office of conſiderable diſtinction in the ſtate, made the publiſher of the paper now mentioned (notwithſtanding the boaſted liberty of the preſs) refuſe to take it in; and, though he gave this reaſon for his refuſal, yet, it is highly probable, his fears were groundleſs; Mr H-me has always ſhewn himſelf to be a man of ſuch good humour and command of temper, that he can bear to be either rallied, or oppoſed by argument, and knows well how to make repriſals in either way.

From a very general acquaintance with Mr H—me, from the teſtimony of thoſe who have more the honour of this, and from a particular acquaintance with a great part of his writings, the author of theſe eſſays is always ready to acknowledge his great abilities as an hiſtorian and politician, as a man of genius and erudition, of humanity and good breeding, but he muſt always deny him any meritas a *Theologician* or even as a philoſopher; on the contrary, he laments the effects of his ſcepticiſm and infidelity, both as to himſelf and others, and would, moſt ſincerely, rejoice to hear, that, after all his attacks on chriſtianity, he was become a convert to that religion which he has ſo long oppoſed, and a trophy of the Redeemer's victory over the powers of darkneſs and error.

merous admirers in the weſter end of the town. My deſire of ſucceſs to your *remembrancing* ſcheme, rigid as it is, engages me to put it in your power to pay them a ſmall compliment, by *recording* what may otherwiſe run a riſk of being loſt to the public and to themſelves; for the office of *Recorder* I take to be very nearly connected with yours. And am,

SIR,

Your humble ſervant,

PLACIDUS.

A LETTER from LORD B-L-NG--KE, to Meſſ. *V--t--e*, *H—e*, and *R-ſſ-au*.

My *Dear Children*,

IF the warmth of your preſent diſputes, with one another, will permit you to hearken to the admonitions of a parent, I hope I ſhall have a favourable hearing from you all; and, not the leſs, that being now removed from the ſociety of mortals, I may be ſuppoſed to judge the more impar-

tially

tially of any differences that take place among them; for I am none of thoſe ſpirits, who are made ſo pure and perfect, as not to be any more affected by ſenſible concerns; I never ſtudied ſpiritual purity ſo much, that, even when diſembodied, it ſhould be either my aim or my attainment.

But I am not to break through the ſecrets of my priſon houſe, though I know ye have a curioſity, mixed with ſome apprehenſions with reſpect to them: It is not to inform you as to *my* ſtate, but to admoniſh you as to *your own*, that I now take upon me to write to you, and I do it with parental fondneſs, as one whoſe authority and affection ye will readily admit; whatever may be your animoſities with reſpect to one another, I have no doubt of your being all equally devoted to me; I know that your joint endeavour is to propagate my principles of infidelity and ſcepticiſm, by decrying all pretences to revelation, particularly the chriſtian, as being too humbling to reaſon, too pure and ſpiritual in its precepts to meet with a favourable reception from any of my family and diſciples, who have more ſpirit than to ſubmit to thoſe doctrines of humility, ſelf denial, and mortification, which are therein recommended.

Such are your preſent views and ſentiments of things, and ſuch were my own when among you, when I ſtood foremoſt in the crowd of free thinkers; when liſtening aſſemblies hung upon my lips; when the preſs laboured with my writings, and all the mercenary attendants of the muſes trembled at my nod. To theſe diſtinctions, ye, my children, have happily ſucceeded, ye owe them to the taſte of the *times* *, ſo that I paved the way to your obtaining them, and ye even rivalled me in them before I left you: My mantle, like that of a celebrated Iſraelitiſh prophet, ſeems to have fallen upon you; and, though ye are neither apoſtles nor prophets, ye have conſtituted yourſelves the *oracles of infidelity*.

Allow

* The preſent prevalence of infidelity, in different forms, does not ſo much appear from the number or literary eminence of any late writers againſt chriſtianity; nor indeed from any additional weight they have thrown into the ſcale of argument on the ſubject ſince the days of Julian and Celſus, but from the converſation and manners of the half-learned (yet often otherwiſe entertaining) witlings of our times, when they have any opportunity of diſplaying their colloquial talents in this way; nor have ſufficient præmonitions been wanting, that the little reſpect here paid to their *matadores* may draw their polemical reſentment on theſe curſory, unelaborate tracts and their author; but it will fall like the harmleſs thunder on the ſtage, as only the ſubject of a little amuſement to one, who, though he would be extremely ſorry to fail of that benevolence and good manners, that candour and chriſtian charity *due to* them, yet, while conſcious of the rectitude of his own intentions, is equally unſollicitous about their praiſe or their cenſure.

Allow me therefore, to congratulate you on the honours ye have acquired in the republick of letters, while others commiſerate the times to which ye owe them. While ye have the reward of your *merit* make the beſt of it now, for it is a very different kind of *merit* that would avail you hereafter: But to this diſtant conſideration I am not to ſuppoſe that you will condeſcend to pay any more regard than I did myſelf; my admonitions ſhall therefore be ſuited to what concerns you at preſent. I ſhall firſt addreſs myſelf to each of you ſeparately, and ſubjoin ſuch advice as may ſuit you all in common.

To you then (*my dear Optimiſt*,*) my firſt regard is due; the lively ſallies of your fancy often captivated mine: What though (upon a compariſon with ſome of your countrymen and cotemporaries) poſterity ſhould ſay that the fancy only is entertained by V—lt—re while the judgment is informed by the immortal *Sully* and the Baron de *Monteſquieu*? What ſignifies it, though your parts ſhould hereafter be thought more ſpecious than ſolid, your knowledge of more compaſs than depth? None of theſe reflections come now to diſturb you; the

* The title of a piece of Voltaire's wrote in the allegorical way, the meaning of which (if it has any meaning at all,) ſeems to be to ridicule the common notion of providence, that all things are ordered for the beſt upon the whole.

brilliancy of your ſpirit and ſingularity of your conceits gain you ſufficient applauſe at preſent; amidſt great inaccuracies, you have the art of making yourſelf thought accurate, you can puzzle the underſtanding which you want to miſlead, and find your way to the heart, even when you mean to corrupt it.

Fired with the noble ambition of following my ſteps, your greateſt danger is, that you may overſhoot your own mark; ſtrange as it may appear therefore from me, I muſt adviſe, that for maintaining the balance of your mind, inſtead of the *Britiſh Free-thinkers*, you would ſometimes make the *Geneva Divines* your ſtudy, and inſtead of *Julian* and *Celſus*, put up with *Thomas a Kempis* and *Monſ. Fenelon*; what makes ſuch a counterpoiſe neceſſary to the ardour of your genius is, that great wit and madneſs are often found to be nearly allied,—you are juſtly deemed one of the brighteſt wits of the regions *above*, but there are many brighter *below*.

To ſay the ſame of our *Hiſtorians*, may be thought incredible, when comparing their merit with that of Mr *H-me*. My favourite child *H-me*, ſo much celebrated for your *candour**, think not that I flatter when I deal

* Raillery apart; there is nothing here ſaid of Mr *H——e*'s candour, acuteneſs, facetiouſneſs, and many other valuable

deal candidly with you; you know I was always far above being ſuſpected in this way, and yet what is no more than doing you juſtice, might draw ſuch ſuſpicion in the caſe of any other: Your talents for writing have long been conſpicuous, you had my own approbation till I was laid in the duſt; then indeed

valuable qualities and endowments, that will not be readily acknowledged by all who know him. What a pity is it, that (through a fondneſs either for ſcepticiſm or ſingularity) his eminent talents and aſſiduity as a writer, do not ſeem to be employed for the benefit of mankind; and without this, I cannot ſee why a man ſhould be more reſpectable for his natural abilities than for the height of his ſtature or the comelineſs of his perſon.

With reſpect to Meſſrs *V—t—re* and *R—ſſ—au*, it would likewiſe be uncandid to deny them the praiſe due to their ſprightly entertaining manner of writing, and perhaps they would have more praiſe did they appear leſs ſollicitous about it; but we can ſcarcely denominate them men of *genius* unleſs the rays of their genius were more collected to ſome particular branch of ſcience, in which they appeared to excel; if they are luminaries, it is of the excentrick or erratick kind, ſo little confined to any one ſyſtem, that they are diſclaimed by all, and dreaded as detrimental rather than beneficial in their influence; they are, however, intitled to our candour, benevolence and Chriſtian charity; nor will it be eaſy, upon Chriſtian principles, to juſtify the ſeverity with which one of them has been treated. Opinions of a dangerous tendency are indeed to be oppoſed, but when any thing like external force and rigour are employed for this purpoſe, it creates a ſuſpicion of their being too well founded to be ſuppreſſed in any other way; if either *reaſoning* or *raillery* are employed in ſupporting them, they are moſt effectually oppoſed by the ſame weapons, with this caution only as to the latter, that when employed about ſerious matters, we are to beware of uſing it in ſuch a manner as may make them appear leſs important and intereſting than they really are; but that it may with propriety and ſucceſs, be ſometimes thus employed, appears from Elijah's conteſt with the prieſts of Baal, and ſeveral other paſſages of ſcripture authorizing it.

indeed I ceaſed to be an infidel, ſophiſtry and ſcepticiſm forſook me, but the 'unconquerable will remained, and ſtedfaſt oppoſition to truth': How could I then fail of admiring your ingenious manner of perplexing it, and theſe elegant ſophiſms, by which you ſtudy, not to diſcover truth, but to confirm yourſelf and others in error: My principles were indeed ſo acceptable to this age of refinement, that it was much eaſier for you to conform to its taſte, than to correct it; but leſt religion and morality ſhould again come in faſhion, an hiſtorian of your acuteneſs was neceſſary to oppoſe them; an hiſtorian therefore I pronounce you far ſuperior to *Tacitus**, for *Tacitus* never had ſo many admirers in *P--d- m——m*.

Your *Eſſays* may poſſibly be read but by a few, and, even by theſe may be little underſtood; nothing leſs therefore than a genius of ſuperior addreſs and ſagacity, could have either ſet you on writing *Hiſtory* or enabled you to accompliſh it in the manner you have done, for engaging many to be your readers for intereſting them in your narrations, and for intermixing your religious

* Mr H——e, as an hiſtorian, ſeems to have formed himſelf upon *Tacitus*, and to have followed him *paſſibus æquis*; he cannot therefore be ignorant that even Tacitus has given ſome evidence in favour of chriſtianity, by aſſerting that ſometime before the reign of Veſpaſian, there was through the eaſtern world a general expectation that one born in Judea ſhould be the ſupreme ruler of mankind: To whom can this be ſo well applied as to the MESSIAH expected by the Jews and acknowledged by the Chriſtians?

religious reflections with national tranſactions, theological errors with hiſtorical truths, ſo as to gain ſome reſpect to the one, under cover of the other, and to make ſome boluſes of abſurdity go eaſily down, by the delicioufneſs of the vehicle in which they are conveyed.

By ſuch heterogenous mixtures as theſe, have you brought ſome ſimple young men to believe that adultery is a ſmaller crime than drunkenneſs, that miracles are incredible, that all religion is either fanaticiſm or ſuperſtition, and the like precious doctrines; revelation you have exploded, chriſtianity you have almoſt anathematized, and the once celebrated martyrs and reformers you have brought to the level of common men; but, as for theſe petty critics who preſume to bark at you, "why! you beſtride them "like a Coloſſus, they walk under your "huge legs, and peep about to find them-"ſelves diſhonourable graves." Taking all this therefore into the account, and, along with it, the profundity of your genius, the elevation of your views, and the facetiouſneſs of your converſation, no wonder that civilians and ſtateſmen ſhould be your converts, that public negociations ſhould be committed to you, and public emoluments beſtowed; when like to be perſecuted in one country, you fly to preferment in another,

ther, and leaving poor *R—ſſ—au* to be the martyr, you are become the illuſtrious champion of infidelity*.

My

* The *foundation* of Mr Hume's ſceptical ſyſtem of philoſophy is; that, laying aſide the intuitive ſuggeſtions of *common ſenſe* as no ſufficient mean of proof, and admitting only ſuch proof as ariſes from abſtract *reaſoning* or *theory*; we have no evidence of the exiſtence either of *matter* or *ſpirit* as the ſubſtratum of the qualities, effects, or operations commonly aſcribed to them; ſo that, (according to him,) all that any man knows or ſhould believe, is, that there are certain *impreſſions* made on him, that theſe are followed or attended by certain *ſenſations*, *perceptions*, or *ideas*, and that the preſent impreſſion made by any object, as heat, cold, &c. or the idea of it when felt or perceived, differs from the idea of it when remembered, believed, imagined, or reflected on, only in reſpect of being more or leſs lively; but the real exiſtence of any object making ſuch an impreſſion, or of any permanent being perceiving it, he doubts, as a thing that cannot be demonſtrated.

He doubts then (you'll ſay) of his own exiſtence! Yes, ſure: He acknowledges this doubt of his being any more than a collection of ideas or perceptions ſucceeding one another, and does not admit the exiſtence of any percipient being they belong to: Nay, the *univerſe* itſelf (he doubts) is but a heap of perceptions or effects, but without evidence of there being any by whom it is perceived, or by whom it was produced; for, arguing from our common ideas of power and its effects, or from effects to cauſes, he rejects, as having no connection in reaſon, whatever they have in experience, or according to the common ſenſe and apprehenſions of mankind; or, granting particular effects to be commonly admitted as proofs of the exiſtence of their cauſes, the *univerſe* (though a collection of all theſe effects,) is, ſays he, ſomething ſo ſingular and unparalleled that it cannot be argued about in the ſame way.

Nor is it only *material* and *immaterial* exiſtences, but likewiſe *moral* exiſtence which Mr Hume doubts of, admitting nothing in moral qualities or virtues, ſuch as juſtice, temperance, &c. either in reſpect of the volition or approbation attending them, that can diſtinguiſh them, or put them on a different footing from the natural qualities or endowments of ſtrength, ſagacity, beauty, &c.

In

My beloved unfortunate *R—ſſ—au*, how can I thus mention you without a tear? could ſuch a tribute be expected from *H—d—s*, to whom can it be more juſtly due? In the cauſe of infidelity, you have fought moſt unſkilfully, without money, without friends, without cunning to protect you,

In a word, let Mr *Hume*'s doctrines have their full effect, and there is an end of all religion and morality; but providence has in all ages interpoſed for preventing this, and it is to be particularly remarked in the preſent caſe, that the univerſity of *Aberdeen* has had the honour of being diſtinguiſhed in defending the cauſe of truth and virtue from the attacks of their ſceptical opponents, and whoever would wiſh to have a full view of the ſophiſtry of Mr *Hume*'s reaſonings in particular, may conſult the writings of doctors *Gerard*, *Campbell*, and *Reid*, all of them once members of that univerſity: But I have lately had the pleaſure of peruſing a new treatiſe, intituled, "An Eſſay on the nature and immutability of Truth;" which appears to me to give the ſceptical ſyſtem the moſt fatal blow it ever received; and, as I find from the title page, that Mr *Beattie*, the ingenious author of this Eſſay, belongs alſo to the univerſity of *Aberdeen*, I would now beg leave to ſuggeſt, that, inſtead of any further diſputation, a tomb-ſtone may be laid for Mr Hume in one of the college halls of Aberdeen, with the following ſhort inſcription: "Here lies that huge bundle of ideas, or "ſucceſſive unperceived perceptions, once known by the "name of David Hume, Eſq;" But let me add, that, though the interment of the *ideal* David Hume, is now, *without all doubt*, ſo near, yet, it is hoped, and earneſtly wiſhed, that ſome *reality* of him may remain, till the happy event mentioned in the end of our annotation, p. 121, take place with reſpect to him; nor am I without hopes that this may, ſooner or later, be the caſe; nay, ſo much do his genius and character, in ſome reſpects, pleaſe me, that I do moſt earneſtly wiſh for it, as what would have many deſireable conſequences, both with reſpect to himſelf and others; and, with a view to it, I beg leave (if theſe ſheets happen to come in his way,) to recommend to him a careful review of the 9th chap. of the Acts of the Apoſtles, with Lord Lyttleton's judicious obſervations on it.

you, hence you are driven, like Cain, from the place of your nativity, as a fugitive and a vagabond on the face of the earth; like him too, you have your fears, nor do they ſeem to be groundleſs, that every man who finds you would be your deſtroyer: How much better had you been in your own ſtate of nature, eating apples and acorns with the ſavage of the woods? Your incomparable *Emilius* * would not then have diſturbed you

* A Treatiſe of Monſ. R--ſſ--u's on Education, in which (as in all his works) there are ſome things very ingenious, but not enough to make up for their dangerous tendency with reſpect to religion: This occaſioned his being obliged to leave France for fear of a proſecution. And now that (to uſe a compariſon of his own) he has, like an old worn out maſtiff, been chaſed from one kingdom to another, and at length thrown himſelf on the protection of the Engliſh. It would be ungenerous to deny him this, even tho' the oddity of his behaviour to Mr H--me, may, by ſome, be thought to render him unworthy of the public notice, for it only ſhews, that J. J. R--ſſ--au is ſtill J. J. R--ſſ--au, whether he is in Switzerland, in France, or in England, nay it muſt be owned, that, in reſpect of his epiſtolary talents, he likewiſe appears to be the ſame, and that in his letters to Mr H--me, even ſince their breach, there appears, amidſt all his abſurdities, a certain openneſs of temper and intrepidity (I may ſay) of ſpirit, in his imaginary diſtreſs, which cannot but ſtrike any perſon of ſentiment who reads them. He now gives up (he ſays) all his reputation for life, and (we may likewiſe add,) all his views of wordly intereſt to Mr H--me, and, tho' the ſacrifice is not very great, as no wiſe men would much envy him for any ſhare he ever had of either, yet one cannot help obſerving, that, if he was a proper object of royal munificence formerly, he is no leſs ſo now, tho' ſo extravagant as to refuſe it through the mediation of Mr H-me, whoſe conduct towards him was truly noble and diſintereſted, till they came to an open rupture, but who has thereupon gone rather too far in the way of expoſing one

you, nor the good citizens of Geneva been alarmed by your zeal, in England or France, you had not been heard of, nor fled for protection to your fellow labourer *H--me*; aſleep or awake his words had not pierced you, nor his looks * ſtruck ſuch terror,

one ſo remakably friendleſs and forlorn, and whoſe ignorance of our language diſables him to defend himſelf. The charge of his making a ſhew of poverty and diſtreſs, which were not real, is ſo ignominious, and ſo inconſiſtent with other parts of his character, that it ſhould either have been ſuppreſſed or ſupported, by ſome better authority than bare aſſertion. The probability is, that, on Mr H-me's withdrawing the additional board paid on his account at *Wotton*, unknown to himſelf, he ſhall be left in more deſtitute circumſtances than ever; and ſuch as, if properly repreſented by ſome other mediator, would procure him at leaſt one half of the penſion formerly offered him; the other half (which he well deſerves to forfeit for his capriciouſneſs) would be well beſtowed on the widow of a very uſeful and unexceptionable writer [Doctor *Leland*] whoſe view of the Deiſtical writers is well known to the public, and whoſe widow has, for the ſupport of herſelf and family, opened a ſubſcription at Dublin for publiſhing ſome poſthumous works of her huſband lately deceaſed. This is humbly ſuggeſted by one, who (tho' he feels for the diſtreſs of others, be their principles or opinions what they will,) has as little of family connection with Mr Leland, as with Mr R--ſſ--au; but who, thinks that the former has done more in defence of Chriſtianity, than the later was able to do in oppoſition to it, and that Leland in ſome of his *Things*, as the learned Biſhop of Glouceſter diminutively calls them, has, with remarkable modeſty, and no unneceſſary oſtentation of learning, done as much ſervice to religion as his Lordſhip, by his edition of Shakeſpear, his elaborate Legation, &c. and his controverſial correſpondence with the amiable Biſhop of Oxford.

* This, it is ſuppoſed, refers to ſome words and looks of wonderful ſignificancy, mentioned in the printed account formerly quoted, from which it likewiſe appears, that a penſion generouſly procured by Mr *H--me*, for Monſ. R-ſſ-au, was

when encountering your's, neither Princes nor miniſters could perſecute you with *Penſions*; ſome cavern would afford you a ſafe retreat even without a *governante*, your faithful *cat* would defend you from rivals and criticks of the ravenous tribes.

But let me not add to your diſtreſs, by reciting further what you failed of attaining: It may give you more comfort to conſider what I myſelf forfeited and felt, and to which you cannot be ſuppoſed entirely a ſtranger; let therefore the thoughts of my ſufferings reconcile you to your own. What I have wrote upon exile, ſuits our common experience; but my ſpirit was invincible by faction or fate. I diſplayed the merit of a *patriot King*, when my loyalty was ſuſpected, and the deſire of my heart denied me. My religion no Monarch on earth could deprive me of; it was always unknown, both to others and myſelf; my freedom and property were likewiſe continued, but I no longer ſhone as a miniſter of ſtate; from philoſophy or divinity, I diſdained to take comfort, but yielded to paſſion the remainder of my life.

Such

was, with more generoſity than gratitude or diſcretion, rejected by the latter. As for the two animals, here next taken notice of, they are ſaid to have been hitherto the inſeparable companions of this philoſopher, and worthy of being henceforth reckoned among the ſprightly inhabitants of Parnaſſus.

Such then, (my dear R--ſſ--au) have been my political progreſs and ſufferings. You are the firſt to whom I ever deigned to complain, and I do it with a view to mitigate your diſtreſſes, by recounting my own. But after addreſſing you, and my other two favourite pupils ſeparately, allow me only to add a few ſhort admonitions, ſuited to you all in common.

Firſt then, let me, from my own experience, adviſe you to beware of any open breach or diſſenſions among yourſelves; however high your emulation is to ſurpaſs one another in zeal for the ſucceſs of my doctrine, yet beware of diſcovering your ſecret feuds and animoſities, ſo as to hurt the common cauſe. Ye all know, how much my character and dignity were endangered, by endeavouring to bring diſgrace on the memory of my friend Mr P--pe. Nothing but the merit of my poſthumous works, could have prevented your endeavouring to bring the like diſgrace upon me, as ſoon as my final departure from you diſabled me to ſtand up in my own defence: Your indiſcretion at preſent, is indeed beyond mine; ye attack one another; even before any of you is laid in ſilence, and unable to make reply, your conteſtsmuſt therefore expoſe you the more, by recriminating on one another; and your abandoning the unhappy

R-ſſ--au, may draw ridicule on your triumvirate.

My next advice to you is briefly this: Conſcious that theology is, by no means, your talent; knowing alſo how little your cauſe will bear the ſcrutiny of the judicious, and how few theſe are, when compared to the unintelligent undiſcerning multitude, beware of cloſe fighting; beware of any ſerious argumentation; addreſs yourſelves, as much as poſſible, to the paſſions and prevailing corruptions of the age: Practiſe on the young and inexperienced, the ſenſual and prophane. Eccleſiaſticks of all denominations ye are to conſider as your profeſſed enemies; admit of no diſtinctions among them, nor any ſuppoſition of their being actuated by devotion, but by worldly intereſt: If any of them have been diſtinguiſhed for bigotry, ignorance or indiſcretion, repreſent them all as ſuch: Ye are rather to put a negative on all religions, than to make any poſitive declaration of your own; where popery is profeſſed, ſpeak as favourably of proteſtantiſm as the court of inquiſition will permit you; but if you happen to be among proteſtants, let the beauty of the Catholick church be your theme. Refine upon all religions, but beware of admitting that the true one is any more than an ideal or imaginary phantom,

incompatible

incompatible in any form, with the condition of mortals *.

Laſt of all, let me adviſe you, now that your doctrine is ſo faſt gaining ground, and the number of your converts increaſed, to

 beware

* The tendency of *true* or *vital Religion* (conſidered as diſtinct from the outward modes of worſhip, and from formality and ſuperſtition on the one hand, as much as from fanaticiſm and bigotry on the other) is to advance the perfection of human nature into a greater conformity to the Divine will, by mantaining an habitual regard to it, in heart and life, according to the various diſcoveries made of it to us both by reaſon and revelation: Though therefore it ſhould, in this imperfect ſtate, fail of having its full effect in the way of improvement or comfort, and, though their number may be few (comparatively ſpeaking) on whom it has even a partial effect; yet, if it has ſo with any, or in any degree, it would be as unfair to conclude, that all religion is vain and imaginary, becauſe it makes no man perfect, as it would be to conclude, that the whole phyſical art is vain, becauſe no man is made thereby perfectly healthy and immortal; but we have much more to ſay for the *Religion* of *Jeſus*, in ſo much as he has brought life and immortality to light, for animating the hopes, and invigorating the endeavours of all his upright and faithful followers, for that, even in the moſt degenerate ages of chriſtianity, there have always been ſome ſuch, will be doubted by none, except ſuch as profeſs with Montagne and Mandeville, that they are well verſed in the defects of mankind, but know nothing of their excellencies or attainments: Theſe depreciate human nature, not from a principle of ſelf-denial, as ſome humble ſincere chriſtians do, upon a juſt view of its univerſal depravity, but that, by aboliſhing virtue, they may likewiſe aboliſh vice, and admit of no diſtinction between them, nor any reality in either, but what ariſes from a regard to external motives and human inſtitutions:

" Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
" That vice or virtue there is none at all;
" If black and white blend, ſoften and unite
" A thouſand ways, is there no black or white?"

POPE.

beware of changing ſides *; you and I know that the love of ſingularity is one of our darling paſſions; we owe our diſtinction to its progenitors, for it is the offſpring of *folly*

* Beſides the dangerous conſequences already mentioned of the *ſceptical ſyſtem* to religion and morality, by weakening our regard to the teſtimony of reaſon, common ſenſe and moral feelings; beſides this (I ſay) it were eaſy to prove that the tranſition is very natural from this ſyſtem to *credulity*, *ſuperſtition*, and *enthuſiaſm*: For, What are the capital doctrines of this ſyſtem? Why, 1. That, by the uncertainty of *reaſon* and fallacy of *ſenſe*, all knowledge is reſolved into impreſſions of ſimple *belief*, or rather *imagination*, and no grounds left for this, as to things *paſt* and *preſent*, but human teſtimony, which would thus become ſo neceſſary, and indeed ſo deſirable, that the regard to it muſt riſe to *credulity*, and diſpoſe for embracing opinions, the moſt contrary to reaſon and ſenſe; tranſubſtantiation itſelf not excepted.

2. If it ſhould be ſaid that (eſpecially as to what is future) another ground of belief is admitted, and chiefly relied on, in the above ſyſtem, viz. paſt *experience* or obſervation of the *connection* of ideas, in the way of reſemblance, contiguity or cauſation; yet this connection or relation is left on ſo looſe a footing, in reſpect of any permanent *faculty* in us perceiving it, or any reality in the *objects* thus ſeeming to be connected, that we would, upon theſe principles, be naturally led, either to with-hold our belief of ſuch a connection entirely, or (as all caſes are by this ſcheme put upon a level) *ſuperſtitiouſly* to believe in ſuch a connection (without any appeal to our reaſon or ſenſes) wherever any of the connecting principles mentioned ſeem to take place: If famine or peſtilence ſometimes happen after the appearance of comets, rain after the new moon, or the loſs of a battle after the appearance of a crow, we would be led to believe them connected: Is not this ſuperſtition?

3. All exiſtence being queſtioned by the ſceptical ſyſtem, except that of *impreſſions* and conſequent *ideas*, a queſtion muſt ariſe, Whence are theſe impreſſions, if there are no outward permanent objects correſponding with and exciting them? From ſome inviſible ſupernatural Being, perhaps, does the ſceptic ſometimes ſay, and, though this, in ſome caſes, be ſound divinity, yet what is it, when extended to all caſes, but the moſt extravagant ſpecies of *enthuſiaſm*?

folly begot upon *pride*; if, therefore, your opinions become general, ye can no more be ſingular, and my poſthumous doctrine may give you diſguſt; ſhould this ever happen, ſhould ſuch a ſhameful apoſtacy take place, be aſſured, that all your paſt ſervices ſhall be forgot, your praiſes and emoluments from the publick ſhall be withdrawn, the ſpirits b-n—h will commence hoſtilities againſt you, and none more avowedly than

Your preſent *admirer*, *guardian*,
and *counſellor*,

B-L-NG—KE.

DISSER-

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B-L-NG—KE.

DISSER-

DISSERTATION I.

On Conscience.

NO subjects are more nearly allied to one another than *religion* and *morality*, and yet a ſincere lover of both cannot help obſerving with regret, that, in ſome excellent treatiſes upon the latter, a kind of diſtinction ſeems to be kept up, which extends to the very terms that are made uſe of, and that have reſpect to the one as much as to the other. It is poſſible I may myſelf be, in ſome meaſure, chargeable with the ſame fault in the expreſſions uſed for illuſtrating ſome moral ſubjects; and the moſt favourable account I can give of it, is, to aſcribe it either to inadvertence, or to our being ſo much accuſtomed to read the writings of the ancient moraliſts, who, unaſſiſted by the chriſtian revelation, and the diſcoveries therein made of the nature and will of God, were at a loſs in determining as to the foundation of morality and the ultimate end of man, and made uſe of terms or expreſſions ſuited to their imperfect views; but who, if they had had the ſame advantage of revelation, that chriſtian writers have, would probably have ſubmitted to its evidence, and adopted the terms therein uſed;

uſed; and remarkably applicable to both the ſubjects above mentioned, *Religion* and *Morality*.

What is here obſerved might be exemplified in the uſe of the words, *grace*, *faith*, *purity*, *charity*, and the like, ſo induſtriouſly avoided by ſome modern writers on morality, though uſed with ſuch inimitable propriety in our ſacred oracles. But what leads me particularly to make this remark at preſent, is its applicableneſs to the ſubject propoſed for this diſſertation, which is CONSCIENCE, a ſubject of the greateſt importance in religion and morals, but whoſe nature and bounds have, perhaps, been as little attended to as any; nay, and the word itſelf, however frequent in ſcripture, and expreſſive of our common feelings, is almoſt baniſhed the writings of ſome later moraliſts.

In one of our laſt eſſays, we referred our readers to this faithful *Remembrancer*, which is inſeparably connected with us, and intended giving ſome account of its nature and office: We would now therefore wiſh to treat of the ſubject at ſome length, and with ſome accuracy, both in a philoſophical and practical light. In order to which, we ſhall, after premiſing ſome account and definition of it, proceed to conſider the moſt material queſtions that ariſe with reſpect to it.

For

For informing ourſelves with reſpect to the nature and office of Conſcience, it is not the accounts and deſcriptions of others, nor any thing without us, that we ſhould have recourſe to, but what paſſes within ourſelves; for, whatever diſputes may ariſe with reſpect to it, this is univerſally agreed, that it is ſome power or principle every one of us is poſſeſſed of, and which therefore every one of us muſt, by proper attention, be qualified to judge of. God has not left himſelf without a witneſs in any of our breaſts.

Let us therefore conſider the ſtate of our own minds, when either deliberating upon ſome important action, which we are about to do, or reflecting on it after it is done, do we not find ſomething within us, neceſſarily determining us, ſometimes to approve, and ſometimes to condemn ourſelves; to reckon one action good and another evil? This principle or faculty therefore in our minds, which determines our judgment of the morality of our own actions, is what we call *Conſcience*; the ſame that moved Joſeph's brethren to accuſe one another for the ſuppoſed murder of their brother; and Judas Iſcariot to haſten his own death, for having been an inſtrument in effecting that of his innocent Lord and Maſter; the ſame that ſmote King David, when

when awakened at different times by the Prophet's reproof, and made Felix tremble at the Apoſtle's reaſonings on righteouſneſs, temperance, and judgment to come.

In paſſing theſe and the like judgments * on their actions, men are neceſſarily determined, and could not think otherwiſe though they inclined it, or reckoned it their intereſt: Can any man bring himſelf not to approve a juſt, a generous, or grateful action, or can he help diſapproving the contrary? Even the condemned criminal muſt approve the juſtice of the ſentence pronounced againſt himſelf.

Thus then we come to have an idea of *Conſcience*, from its effects or operations, in determining us to approve or condemn our actions; nor is it indeed poſſible for us, in this ſtate of ignorance and imperfection, to form our notions of this, or any of the powers of our mind, from a view of their nature and eſſential conſtitution, but from their effects and operations.

Agreeably to this account of *Conſcience*, it may be thus briefly defined: A reflex principle within us neceſſarily or involuntarily

* It will eaſily be ſeen (as we ſhall have occaſion to ſhew more fully afterwards) that this *neceſſity* has not reſpect to the actions themſelves, which are *free*, but to our approbation of them.——On a ſuppoſition of *freedom* in acting, *approbation* and accountableneſs are founded.

tarily determining us to approve of ſome of our actions and affections as good, and diſapprove of the contrary as evil, in a moral and religious ſenſe, as we ſhall afterwards ſee; in which view, the queſtions that naturally ariſe with reſpect to it are as lows:

I. What *relation* it bears to the *other powers* of the mind?

II. What *qualities* in actions and affections determine it to approve or diſapprove of them?

III. What *ends* or purpoſes it anſwers in the human conſtitution?

IV. How far its *province* or office properly extends, and about what objects it is exerciſed?

V. Wherein the regard due to it conſiſts, and how far its judgment *juſtifies?*

VI. How we may know when it is properly exerciſed, and this regard paid to it?

A particular enumeration and ſolution of the various caſes of Conſcience that occur, or the practical queſtions that may ariſe with reſpect to it, in different conditi-

ons

ons and circumſtances, is not here propoſed; this would be a fitter ſubject for a ſyſtem or volume than for a ſhort eſſay; and, to be fully acquainted with it, we muſt refer to the various writers on caſuiſtic divinity and morality; but a proper ſolution of the general queſtions above mentioned, may poſſibly enable each of us to be his own caſuiſt in moſt caſes that occur in common life; which is indeed neceſſary in order to a proper diſcharge of the offices of it. We begin therefore with conſidering.

I. What relation Conſcience bears to the other powers of the mind, how far it is connected with or diſtinct from them, and to which of them it ſeems to be moſt nearly allied?

In order to our underſtanding this, it will be neceſſary to explain the nature of *conſciouſneſs* of *reflection* and *intelligence* in general.

By the general word *conſciouſneſs*, ſeems to be meant the action of the mind when reflecting on its own ideas or operations: It is too ſimple an act, to admit of a juſt definition, and ſeems to be a kind of mental feeling or ſenſation *

* Hence we often uſe the words *conſcious* and *ſenſible* promiſcuouſly, as when we ſay, I am *ſenſible* that I am awake, I move, write, &c. but when we apply the word ſenſible to the operations of the mind, as when we ſay, I am *ſenſible* that I think, reaſon, &c. it ſeems entirely metaphorical; as alſo, when we uſe it for being perſuaded, convinced, as, that I am *ſenſible* it is true.

of the impreſſions made on us by any objects, either from without, or from within, without which thoſe objects and impreſſions are not taken notice of by the mind, ſo as to raiſe any ideas in it: Thus, for inſtance, upon making any noiſe near us, there muſt be an impreſſion made on the ſenſory, whether we attend to it or not, but, till it is attended to in a reflex way, we are not *conſcious* of our hearing it; no idea can be ſaid to be conſequent on this impreſſion.

The words *perception*, *intelligence*, *reflection*, *conſciouſneſs*, would ſeem to expreſs ſomething different from one another; and yet are often promiſcuouſly uſed. *Perception* is aſcribed to all ſenſible or animal beings, from the loweſt to the higheſt, and is properly the receiving of ideas, in conſequence of impreſſions made on them in the way of ſenſation. *Intelligence* ſuppoſes more than a mere principle of life, perception and ſenſation; it ſuppoſes not only a capacity of receiving ideas, in conſequence of ſuch ſenſible impreſſions, but likewiſe a power of reflecting on theſe ideas, and operating upon them.

Or, in other words, as the objects that make an impreſſion on the mind, or raiſe ideas in it, may be either *external* to it, and what we call ſenſible, or *internal*, *viz.* its own operations about the ideas it has from

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the former, becoming another ſet of objects, by *reflection*, and raiſing another ſet of ideas; making this diſtinction, I ſay, of *external* and *internal* objects, *perception* ſeems to expreſs more particularly, the receiving of ideas from the firſt of theſe from *external* objects by ſenſation; *intelligence*, only the receiving ideas from the *internal* by *reflection*; hence we aſcribe the former to all animal beings, but confine the latter to the ſuperior claſſes of them, as not reckoning the inferior capable of reflection*.

The ſame reſtriction we make of the object and ſubject of *conſciouſneſs*; it is an idea got from reflection upon the relation which the mind's perceptions and operations bear to itſelf, implying, as it were, property in them. Thus, then, external objects are never the objects of conſciouſneſs; but the ideas received from them, and the operations of the mind about theſe ideas, becoming, as it were, internal objects; we never ſay, we are conſcious of a ſound, but of hearing a ſound. And when theſe objects of conſciouſneſs, (either of a religious or moral nature) come to be approved or diſapproved of by

* It may however be queſtioned, whether *reflection* may not, in ſome degree, be aſcribed to ſome of the inferior tribes of animals, or if only to man? But, this is a queſtion more curious than uſeful, and does not concern our preſent enquiry.

the mind, we aſcribe this approbation or diſapprobation to a peculiar principle in it, which we call *Conſcience*.

We now proceed therefore, to conſider how far this principle falls in with ſome other powers of the mind, as *reaſon*, and a *moral ſenſe*, or is diſtinct from them.

As to the firſt, it muſt be owned, that, taking *reaſon* in the moſt extenſive ſenſe, for the power of diſcovering truth and good, of approving them, and diſtinguiſhing them from the contrary; in this extenſive ſenſe, I ſay, it might be ſaid to comprehend the office of *conſcience*; as it would be difficult to find any difference between the teſtimony of *reaſon*, concerning our own moral actions, in approving or condemning them after examination, and the operations of *Conſcience*; but if the province of *reaſon* be limited, (as in ſtrict propriety of ſpeech it ſhould be,) by confining it to the diſcernment or diſcovery of the nature and tendency of actions, any conſequent judgment with reſpect to them, in the way of approbation or diſapprobation, may be conſidered as the province of *Conſcience*; or, if *reaſon* may be ſaid to judge of actions, it's judgment is ſlower, and more deliberate; that of *Conſcience* more immediate, involuntary and neceſſary, accompanied with ſome reflection indeed, but in a leſs degree than the other.

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The moſt manifeſt difference, however, between them lies in this, that the judgment of *reaſon*, extends to the actions of *others*, as well as to our own; that of *Conſcience* is confined to *our own* actions, to ſuch as we are *conſcious* of; nor does the province of *reaſon*, with reſpect to our own actions, ſeem to be the judging of their *goodneſs* ſo much as of their *truth*, of their true and real tendency to ſome end, or conformity to ſome rule or law; in conſequence of which diſcoveries with reſpect to them, *Conſcience* paſſes judgment on them as good, evil, or indifferent; which ſuggeſts to us another difference betwixt them lying in this, that *reaſon* cannot be ſaid to judge of *ultimate ends*, but only of *means* and *ſubordinate ends*, and theſe means only whoſe tendency to the ultimate end it diſcovers and reflects on; but *Conſcience* approves of ultimate ends, and even of means, whoſe tendency to theſe we do not ſee, or at leaſt do not conſider.

Thus, making the good of the whole an ultimate end, we cannot perhaps be ſaid to approve of it from *reaſon*, as we cannot, if it be really an ultimate end, give any *reaſon* * for this our approbation; it may

* If the reaſon be reſolved into the will of God, private good or intereſt, original fitneſs, right, or the like, ſtill the queſtion

therefore be aſcribed to *Conſcience*, as a diſtinct principle from *reaſon*. In the ſame way, when we approve of any of our own actions as virtuous or morally good, it muſt be either on account of ſome abſolute ultimate goodneſs conceived to be in them, our approbation of which (as in the former caſe) we can give no reaſon for; or it muſt be on account of their tendency to ſome ultimate end, as the good of the whole, private good, or conformity to the will of God; but in caſes where we do not perceive or conſider this tendency, * can it be *reaſon* that leads us to approve of them, or may it not more properly be a different principle, as *Conſcience*, anticipating, as it were, this end, without reaſoning about it, and whoſe operations may be ſaid to be rather *ſentimental* than intellectual?

Any diſtinction, therefore, we can make, betwixt the teſtimony of reaſon and that of conſcience muſt lie in this, that reaſon examines and diſcerns, conſcience approves: Reaſon is ſlower and more deliberate in its operations than conſcience; tho' both have ſome

queſtion will recur, For what reaſon is any of theſe approved? And where none can be aſſigned, the approbation of it cannot be aſcribed to *reaſon*, but, (as is here ſaid) to *Conſcience*.

* This perhaps is the caſe, with ſome in many of their actions, or expreſſions of affection, as thoſe of gratitude, humanity, and wherever reflection and deliberation do not take place.

ſome degree of reflection accompanying them: Reaſon judges of all actions; conſcience only of our own, or ſuch as we are conſcious of: Reaſon judges properly of their truth, conſcience of their goodneſs; and, in fine, reaſon judges of means, and thoſe only whoſe tendency to the ultimate end is diſcovered; conſcience of ultimate ends themſeves, and even of means, whoſe tendency to them is only preſumed, in the way of anticipation, tho' not diſtinctly traced.

The other faculty of the mind, whoſe operations it will be moſt difficult to diſtinguiſh from thoſe of *Conſcience*, is what we call a *moral ſenſe*, or power of receiving the ideas of moral good and evil from actions, approving of the one as grateful, and diſapproving of the other as ungrateful to it. One difference ſeems undeniable betwixt them from the extent of their object; that of a moral ſenſe, being (as was before ſaid of reaſon) all moral actions of *ourſelves or others*; that of conſcience, *our own* only: There may perhaps be another diſtinction betwixt them worth notice, from our reckoning the exerciſe of *Conſcience*, (tho' not ſo *deliberate* as that of *reaſon*) to have more of *deliberation* and reflection accompanying it, than that of a *moral ſenſe*.

It may indeed be queſtioned, whether we can aſcribe ſo much reflection to this or any

any ſenſe, as to ſay that it approves or diſapproves of any thing; ſimple perception being the office of a ſenſe, but approbation or diſapprobation in conſequence of it, being properly that of a diſtinct reflex power of the mind, as *conſcience*.

II. The next queſtion that occurs with reſpect to *Conſcience*, is, what qualities in actions and affections determine it to approve or diſapprove of them? for approbation and diſapprobation muſt, like all other ſimple ideas, have certain correſpondent qualities in their objects, by which they are raiſed.

As this is one of the moſt diſputed ſubjects in morals, an enquiry into it may poſſibly carry us farther than would at firſt be expected in ſpeaking of conſcience, but cannot, in ſome meaſure, be here avoided.

We ſhall therefore begin our enquiry by mentioning the different accounts given of theſe moral qualities, and obſerving in general wherein they are placed, and wherein the various accounts of them agree or differ from one another; they are generally placed, therefore, either

1. In an agreeableneſs to nature, *i. e.* to certain natural fitneſſes in things themſelves, or, (which is the ſame,) to the truth of things

things; that is, to the true and real fitneſſes and relations of things.

2. In a tendency either to public or private good.

3. In an agreeableneſs to the will or law of a ſuperior.

4. In an agreeableneſs to reaſon.

5. In an agreeableneſs to a moral ſenſe, or mental faculty of perceiving moral good and evil. Or

6. In an agreableneſs to conſcience.

Of theſe different accounts we may obſerve, that all of them ſeem to make the *qualities* of moral good and evil ſomething relative, or that they ſuppoſe them to have a reference to a mind, either perceiving or appointing them, rather than any poſitive exiſtence of their own.

The firſt hypotheſis indeed, by deducing them from the natural *fitneſſes* of things, ſeems to give them ſuch an exiſtence, but muſt fall in with the reſt, if it is aſked, What end this fitneſs reſpects, and why we approve of this end itſelf, or of actions whoſe tendency to it is either not manifeſt or not attended

attended to and reflected on? If it is an ultimate end, it can be on account of no fitneſs for any thing beyond itſelf that we approve of it, ſo that fitneſs, which always implies ſuch a reference beyond the object itſelf, is incompatible with an ultimate end.

The ſecond opinion does not account for our approbation of the ends mentioned, *public* or *private good*.

To the third opinion, by which all is referred to the *will* of a *ſuperior*, ſome object that it muſt fall in with one of the three laſt mentioned, before it can account for ſuch a ſuperior's approbation of theſe qualities; muſt there not, it is ſaid, be ſomething in his nature, determining him to approve of moral good and diſapprove of its contrary? or are theſe two in themſelves equally indifferent to him, and are they, antecedent to his appointment, equally indifferent to inferior agents, ſo that he might have conſtituted them in ſuch a manner as to have approved of moral qualities in a manner directly contrary to what they now do, or to have reckoned that to be morally good which they now judge to be evil? and, if this be not the caſe, is not his own judgment of theſe qualities limited and regulated, though not by any thing external to himſelf, yet, at leaſt, by ſome principle or quality in his own nature corre-

ſponding

ſponding with that by which we are determined to approve or diſapprove of actions as morally good or evil.

To account therefore for theſe qualities of moral good and evil which excite our approbation or diſapprobation, we muſt (it is ſaid,) have recourſe to one of the other three opinions, to ſome faculty in our own minds, either *reaſon*, *moral ſenſe*, or *conſcience*, in an agreeableneſs to which their eſſence muſt be placed; and, if this be agreed on, the difference will perhaps be found to be more about the name given this faculty and its different operations, than about the nature and office of the faculty itſelf; or, if a nice diſtinction is to be made, in the manner ſet forth under the former queſtion, the province of reaſon is the examination of actions as to their nature and tendency, that of a moral ſenſe the perception of their conſequent moral qualities, it being much a-kin to our perception of ſenſible qualities, as being immediate and independent on the will; but our approving or diſapproving of actions after ſuch an examination and perception of their moral qualities, that is, our paſſing judgment on them in conſequence of this, or giving an active poſitive teſtimony with reſpect to their moral good or evil, belongs to another faculty than either of theſe two laſt mentioned; in

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what regards the actions of others, indeed, our perception and judgment of their moral qualities, may be accounted for from the general teſtimony of reaſon and a moral ſenſe now mentioned; but, as what moſt nearly intereſts us is, our judgment of the morality of our own actions, or, at leaſt of thoſe which we bring home particularly to our own caſe and experience; this may be conſidered as the peculiar province of that principle or faculty within us which we call *conſcience*.

After all, I muſt own that there is ſomething, at leaſt in the manner in which moral writers expreſs themſelves on this ſubject, which does not ſatisfy me; and yet, I doubt much if I can deliver my own ſentiments with reſpect to it, in ſuch a way as will not be liable to ſome exceptions, ariſing from our ignorance of moral as well as of natural *eſſences* or eſtabliſhments. In natural objects we diſtinguiſh between their *primary* and *ſecondary* qualities, (as Mr Lock denominates them,) that is, between thoſe that have a poſitive exiſtence independent of any mind perceiving them, or which are inherent in, and eſſential to the ſubject they belong to, ſuch as ſolidity, extenſion, figure, &c. called primary qualities, and theſe which are not thus eſſential, but ſecondary and accidental, having reſpect to our perception of them, without any

any poſitive exiſtence of their own, (except what ariſes from the primary qualities mentioned,) as colours, ſounds, ſmells, &c. The laſt of theſe, *viz.* ſecondary qualities, are acknowledged to be variable and ſeparable from the ſubject of them; the firſt are not, though ſome indeed have gone ſo far as to deny, or at leaſt, doubt of the exiſtence of theſe likewiſe; but, taking this for granted, (as indeed it may, from the intuitive teſtimony of common ſenſe, without reaſoning upon it,) if, by analogy, we carry the ſame diſtinction to the *moral qualities* of objects, it will be difficult to reconcile us to any hypotheſis, by which they are put on the ſame footing with the *ſecondary qualities* now mentioned, ſo as that moral good and evil might have been otherwiſe conſtituted, had its being ſo been agreeable to the mind appointing or perceiving it: We can ſcarcely allow theſe important moral qualities to have any dependence upon either the will of a ſuperior, or the conſtitution* and faculties of the actor or obſerver; the idea we have

* If the morality of actions, however, had not ſome reſpect to the conſtitution and faculties of the being who acts, then the actions even of brutes might be ſaid to be morally good or evil; yet, the ſame actions which are ſo called when performed by men, it would be abſurd thus to denominate when performed by *brutes*, however important their conſequences may be, which ſhews that theſe moral qualities ſuppoſe the agent to be moral or rational.

of imperfection in whatever refers to and depends upon one or both of these among men, together with our ignorance (as was said) of moral as well as natural essences, is what probably occasions this difficulty; and yet, without some reference to one or both of these, (only raising our ideas higher than to what has any dependence on men,) it will be very difficult, if not impossible, to account for those moral qualities, and speak intelligibly with respect to them. If therefore I may be here allowed to express myself in the way that appears to me least liable to exception, or at least, most consistent with the order of my own ideas; it is as follows:

The goodness of actions either in a moral or religious view, may (to use a word more descriptive of their qualities,) be said to consist in their *rectitude*. Rectitude, in general, has respect to some *rule* or law, in a conformity to which it consists, and it also respects an *end* to which this rule directs; for, when any action or object is said to be *right*, even in a *natural* as well as a *moral* or *religious* sense, the meaning is, that it is agreeable to some particular *rule* or *law*, which is the measure of its goodness and perfection, and that it leads to some particular *end*, for which it is conceived to be good and fit, or perfect: This therefore seems

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to be the notion of rectitude, goodneſs, or fitneſs, in the general: But, more particularly, that which has reſpect to *moral agents*, conſiſts in a conformity to the *law* of their creation, and end for which they were created, conſtituted, and endowed, in the manner they are.

As therefore, the *will* of the SUPREME BEING, made known, both by reaſon and revelation, is the great rule or law with reſpect to men, and his glory, (not in the limited ſenſe in which the word is often uſed, but as connected with the general good) together with the participation of his happineſs and perfection, (according to their order and ſphere in nature, or the capacities given them,) the great end of their being; all goodneſs or rectitude, with reſpect to men, in a moral and religious ſenſe, muſt conſiſt in a *conformity* to the *divine will* or *law*, directing them to ſuch meaſures of conduct as promote the great *end* of their being now mentioned, the unity of which may be always aſſerted, though conſiſting of the two parts we took notice of, (according as it has reſpect to God or to man,) becauſe of the inſeparability of theſe two parts from one another.

This conformity to the will of the Supreme Being, in which all religious and moral rectitude conſiſts, has reſpect to the

temper and affections of the agent, as well as to his actions or the outward expreſſions of them; and, ſo far as human laws have this conformity, either mediately or immediately, they become proper rules of duty; but, without this, they may have a political or arbitrary, but no moral or religious obligation. On this queſtion I ſhall only add a few words more, for obviating what may poſſibly be objected to this account of theſe qualities in actions and affections, which determine us to approve or diſapprove of them.

I. It may, perhaps, be ſaid, that, if their eſſence conſiſts in conformity to the will of the ſupreme Being, and, if nothing happens but by his will or appointment, either all diſtinction is taken away between moral good and evil, or the exiſtence of the latter entirely denied: But this is confounding the queſtion with another, reſpecting the introduction or permiſſion of moral evil, and the manner of reconciling it to the divine government and ſuperintendency: That good and evil are as eſſentially different as light and darkneſs, or any two of the moſt oppoſite qualities in nature, is undeniable; we may as well deny our own exiſtence, or the exiſtence of any thing in the manner that is moſt agreeable to the natural order of

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our ideas; but in what manner the divine ſuperintendency extends to the appointment or permiſſion of moral evil, is one of the myſteries in providence, which we can no more account for than we can account for the *manner* of the exiſtence of any thing in nature, further than that the introduction of moral evil, may, very warrantably, be aſcribed to man's *abuſe* of the *free powers* of action given him; and the giving him theſe powers reſolved into the depth of the divine wiſdom and ſovereignty, of which no account can be given more ſatisfying than that of an inſpired writer, Rom. ix. 19,-21.*

2. To our manner of accounting for the moral qualities in queſtion, by reſolving all moral goodneſs or rectitude into a conformity to the divine will, it may be further objected, that this is putting them upon a mutable or precarious footing, denying them a poſitive exiſtence, and giving room to ſuppoſe that the ſupreme Being might, by an act of his will or authority, have reverſed or altered theſe moral qualities, as eaſily as he might have altered theſe ſecondary or ſenſible qualities of matter formerly ſpoken of, colours, ſounds, &c. by conſtituting us ſo as to make the report of our ſenſes with

* See this more fully treated of in the third Diſſertation.

reſpect to them, quite contrary to what it now is.

To this it may be anſwered, that theſe ſecondary qualities of matter have their dependence on the divine will and appointment, in a manner quite different from the moral qualities mentioned, the former are as it were accidental to the material ſubjects to which they are aſcribed, and not inherent but ſeparable from them; the latter are eſſential to thoſe moral actions or ſubjects they belong to, inherent in them, and as inſeparable from them as perfection is from the Almighty; he may as ſoon ceaſe to be, as ceaſe to be good, juſt, and holy; the perfections of his will, or his moral perfections, are as inſeparable from him, and as unalterable, as thoſe of his underſtanding if (according to our limited views,) we may be thus allowed to expreſs ourſelves on a ſubject, to which our moſt enlarged conceptions and expreſſions are ſo inadequate; the moral qualities therefore in queſtion, or whatever may be conſidered as the emanation, reſult, or effect of theſe perfections, are immutable as the divine nature, and, in the ſame circumſtances and relations of the moral action or agent to whom they are applied, will, upon a proper examination and perception of them, continue to excite the ſame ideas of approbation

or diſapprobation in every intelligent being who beholds them.

3*dly*, The only other objection we can think of to our manner of accounting for thoſe moral qualities, by making their eſſence to conſiſt in a conformity to the Divine will, as the great rule of rectitude, may poſſibly be drawn from the difficulty which ſome may ſuppoſe in inveſtigating or determining this conformity: Our ideas (may ſome ſay) of the Supreme Being, or conceptions of his nature and will may be very different, and muſt not (upon the preſent hypotheſis) our ideas of whatever depends upon it be ſo likewiſe? Beſides, that our rule of action would need to be plain and obvions in all circumſtances, and to all capacities, but if the Divine will is not always ſo, how can it be the rule? How ſhall we be always informed of it, or have it preſent with us, and, in any deverſity of opinions with reſpect to it, how ſhall we determine on what ſide the truth lies? The firſt part of this objection, or what ariſes from the difficulty that may ſometimes be ſuppoſed in inveſtigating and aſcertaining what is the Divine will, ſo as to be always informed of it, and have it preſent with us as our *rule* of action and moral rectitude; this part of the objection, I ſay, will be removed, by a proper attention

tion to the ends and office of Conſcience, as they are to be ſet forth under the two following queſtions; from which, I hope, it will appear, that ſufficient proviſion is made for informing us of whatever is moſt neceſſary to be known by us in this caſe, and the rule of duty, and of all religious and moral rectitude, made clearer than upon any of the other hypotheſes mentioned: As the will of God is the rule, *Conſcience* is the guide or inſtructor he has given us with reſpect to it; a guide to which all intelligent beings, who can be ſuppoſed accountable for their conduct, have acceſs, be their difference otherwiſe, as to their circumſtances or capacities, what it will. And,

As to the *ſecond* part of the objection, ariſing from the "Diverſity of opinions "that may and do ſometimes take place "with reſpect to the moral qualities of the "ſame actions, though all have this in-"ward guide or monitor," we ſhall have occaſion to ſuggeſt what may be neceſſary in anſwer to it on the fifth and ſixth queſtions mentioned; where we ſhall have an opportunity of ſhewing what occaſions the diverſity complained of, even in ſuch ſentiments as are ſuppoſed to be the dictates of conſcience; what regard is due to it notwithſtanding this; how we may know its uncorrupted

uncorrupted ſuggeſtions, and whether a proper regard is paid to them, and, conſequently, how far *accountableneſs* follows, *i. e.* how far we are juſtified or not, by our having its approbation or diſapprobation.

We now proceed therefore, in the order in which theſe queſtions were at firſt propoſed, to conſider the

III. Queſtion, which we mentioned, and on which we may be a little more plain and practical; *namely*, what are the *ends* or *purpoſes* which *Conſcience* anſwers in the human conſtitution, or, for which, our wiſe and merciful Creator implanted this principle in us? We have no reaſon to believe, that he has given the lower orders of his creatures any ſuch principle, and muſt therefore conclude, that there is ſomething diſtinguiſhing in our conſtitution which requires it; what this is, we may eaſily ſee; he has given us *free powers* of action *here*, and made us *accountable* for our uſe of theſe powers *hereafter*: The conſideration of this may teach us the ends or purpoſes for which this principle of Conſcience was given us, firſt as reſpecting our conduct in this life, and, ſecondly, as reſpecting the account we are to give after it.

1ſt Then, with reſpect to this life, the end for which Conſcience was given us is plainly

plainly to regulate our conduct in it, or direct us in the exercise of those *free powers* of acting, by which God has distinguished us from the inferior creation; for, as we cannot, in this infant state, have such clear and irresistible views of the Author and end of our being, with what he requires of us in all circumstances, as might retain us in our duty and obedience, without some continual *Remembrancer* or teacher; if God had not given us such a one ever present with us, we would not have known when we used the liberty or freedom of action given us for our own destruction; we would have been at a loss every moment to know, in the different circumstances in which we may be placed, what is right for us to do, and agreeable to the will of God: As he has here veiled his glory from our mortal eyes, and is not the object of sensible perception, it was necessary he should appoint a witness or vicegerent in our own breasts, for intimating his will to us, till he see fit to admit us to his blissful sight and presence, and give us as it were an intuitive discovery of his will; such a witness or vicegerent to him is *Conscience*, so that, when we have been at all due pains to inform it, we are, in some measure, as much called to attend to its directions as if he delivered his law to us from Mount Sinai with as loud thunder as he did to the children Israel.

As

As matters ſtand with us at preſent, therefore, we have an eaſy way of being directed what to do in every different ſituation of life; we have only to aſk our own hearts, and they will, either immediately, or, upon very little reflection, declare for what is right, their very firſt motions, will generally be towards it, ſo that we ſhall generally find it eaſier to ſee our duty than to miſtake it, there being few or no inſtances of any thing required of us by God, about which we can be long in the dark, or at a loſs what meaſures to take: Can a man, long be at a loſs to know whether he ſhould preſerve his neighbour's life, goods, or reputation, when in his power? Can a man, in plentiful circumſtances, long doubt, whether he ſhould relieve his brother in diſtreſs, or the poor man, if he ſhould be humble, grateful and reſigned? No ſure, he who truly makes *conſcience* of his duty in all relations, is very ſeldom in danger of miſtaking it, ſo as to be an unnatural parent, or an undutiful child; an oppreſſive maſter, or a diſobedient ſervant; an unjuſt ruler or a rebellious ſubject; conſcience (if hearkened to) will point us out our duty in all theſe circumſtances, and indeed, were it not that we are perſuaded of every man's having naturally ſuch a principle for the direction of his conduct, we could

could not depend upon one another in any one inſtance, we ſhould, every moment, have our lives, fortune and every thing that is dear to us, in danger, if another could receive any advantage by our loſs of them.

That this would inevitably be the caſe, that, if there were no reſtraints from conſcience, there could be no dependence upon one another's aſſiſtance and good offices; appears plainly from the behaviour of thoſe, who, by a continued courſe of diſregard to its directions, ſeem, for a time at leaſt, to have ſeared and ſuppreſſed it ſo far, as to make no *Conſcience* of any thing they do or ſay; would any man depend on ſuch as theſe, or chuſe to have dealings with them, in any thing where they could think it there intereſt to deceive him? Without conſcience, therefore, there could be no ſure bond of human ſociety, no firm principle of union and mutual dependence among men, more than among a herd of wild beaſts; their ſuperior capacities would ſerve only to make them the more dangerous to one another: By this inward monitor, it is that the will of God is made known to us, and our own wills reſtrained from theſe enormities, which we would otherwiſe run into.

Nor can any of us charge conſcience with negligence and partiality in the diſcharge of its office; it may ſometimes be

blinded

blinded, and, as it were lulled aſleep by the enchantment of ſurrounding temptations; it may be ſilenced or miſled by the force or falſe lights of paſſion, but it never fails, when awakened and ſet right, to attack its unhappy deceiver with three-fold violence and ſeverity.

It may perhaps be aſked, Where do we ſee conſcience anſwering this great end of regulating human life? Or what effects do we ſee it have on the manners of mankind? To this it may be anſwered, that, in the preſent corrupt ſtate of mankind, it is indeed too little followed and attended to, yet we ſtill ſee enough of its influence and effects to convince us of its unſpeakable importance: To ſee it diſcharging its office with all due authority and integrity, we muſt look at Nature in its native forms and genuine ſimplicity; it is not the courts of Princes we are to ſurvey, or palaces of the great; theſe may mask the truth from its view, and thereby miſlead its judgment, neither are we to look for it in the abandoned ſeats of vice and debauchery; if any thing like human nature is to be found in theſe, it is human nature ſubverted and diveſted of every principle and diſpoſition becoming it: If we would ſee *Conſcience* in its proper exerciſe, ſo as to judge how far it anſwers the great end of regulating human

life, and intimating to us the will of our Maker, we may find it in the peaceful retired abodes of purity and innocence, in the humble cottage of the peaſant unaccuſtomed to the refined pernicious arts of ſelf-deluſion and diſguiſe, or in the youthful breaſt, as yet untainted with the reigning pollutions of the world; not but that ſome men both may and do keep a good conſcience, or obey its uncorrupted ſuggeſtions, in any age or ſituation of life; to deny this, would be going againſt both reaſon and experience; but it is certain, that, in the preſent corrupt ſtate of the world, that age or ſtation of life, which is moſt detached from it and its enſnaring delights, muſt be alſo moſt friendly to innocence, and allow conſcience its proper authority and ſway in the direction of life. From which it becomes ſtill more evident, that this is a principle originally and eſſentially inherent in our nature, and not any thing acquired or induced by education, cuſtom, prejudice, or the like, becauſe, (as was juſt now obſerved) it prevails and operates moſt where there is leaſt acquaintance with the world, and conſequently feweſt opportunities of acquiring any habits, opinions, or principles from it, for the conduct of life.

Thus, then, we ſee the wiſe ends that conſcience anſwers in our conſtitution, with reſpect to this life.—Let us next

2. Conſider

2. Conſider it, as reſpecting *another life hereafter*, and we ſhall ſee ſome further ends for which it was given us; theſe are to *repreſent* to us, in ſome meaſure, the *future conſequences* of our behaviour, or give us a *foretaſte* of the rewards and puniſhments to be diſpenſed in a future ſtate of retribution, ſo as to check and encourage us, according to the tenor of our conduct, and thereby prepare us for juſtifying the future judgment that ſhall be paſſed upon us: Hence it is that conſcience is called our accuſer and our witneſs, giving teſtimony for or againſt us. All God's ways with us, both in this life and the next, will be found to be truth and judgment; he accuſes no man that is not accuſed of his own mind, neither has he left us the ſmalleſt grounds of doubt about the actions which we are accountable for; the tribunal for judging of them is erected in our own breaſts, and conſcience is alſo called the judge who paſſes ſentence on us, condemning or acquitting us here, in the ſame manner that it will do hereafter before the great Judge of the world.

With what fidelity conſcience does all this, experience muſt ſufficiently teach every one of us; happy were we, if we knew it only by the approbation it gives; but alas! ſuch is the prevalence of ſin and corruption, that the beſt of men feel it likewiſe

ſometimes in its condemning capacity, and thoſe who have ever done ſo, can ſpeak the attending anguiſh and compunction of mind, juſt earneſts of its future ſeverity in preying on impenitent ſinners; but if its office, in ſuch circumſtances as theſe, in alarming us to prevent our own undoing, and leading us to timeous repentance; if, here, I ſay, it be ſo ungrateful, how abundantly is it made up by that heart-felt joy and delight, with which it rewards every virtuous action and diſpoſition? Put all the pleaſures of ſin and ſenſe together, they will never equal that inward peace or complacency of ſpirit, which the good man feels in the exerciſe of true juſtice, piety, and devotion; this is indeed heaven in the ſoul, a happy preſage and anticipation of the unmixed, uninterrupted joys that follow it in thoſe bliſsful climes, where purity and peace for ever reign.

Such then are the ends, which conſcience anſwers in the human conſtitution, both with reſpect to this life and the next.—We proceed to the

IV. Queſtion that occurs with reſpect to conſcience, which is (as before ſtated,) to conſider how far its province or office, properly extends?

Agreeably

Agreeably to the account formerly given of *conſcience*, ſome diſtinguiſh between *natural* conſcience, reſpecting thoſe actions which tend to natural good or evil, *moral* conſcience reſpecting moral actions and affections which relate to men, and *religious* conſcience reſpecting our religious conduct or duty to God; but only the two laſt ſeem, in propriety, to deſerve the name; nor is there any great reaſon for diſtinguiſhing theſe two from one another, further than is neceſſary, in order to deſcribe the proper office and province of conſcience, which, more generally, reſpects the whole compaſs of our duty, * as divided into theſe two great branches, what relates to God, and what relates to man: Theſe are the only beings with which we can diſcover ourſelves, in our preſent ſtate, to be morally or religiouſly connected; towards them only, therefore, can any duties or offices be required of us; we have no ſuch connection with ſuperior created ſpirits, as to lay a foundation for duty to them; nor have we any ſuch relation to inferior and irrational beings, that our conduct towards them, can be juſtly denominated matter of conſcience; this has for its object ſuch offices only, as have reſpect either to God or to man.

* See this further illuſtrated and explained in the fourth Diſſertation, part ſecond.

But tho' for explaining theſe two great branches of duty the more clearly, they be thus diſtinguiſhed, yet are they in themſelves inſeparably connected, and their obligation founded on the ſame authority; God has, by injoining our duty to one another, made the performance of it an expreſſion of our regard and duty to himſelf alſo: Nor can it ever be expected that our duty to man, to one another, can be ſteadily performed, or the diſcharge of it ſufficiently ſecured, unleſs a regard to God take place; but we ſhall, for diſtinctneſs, take a general view of theſe two ſeparately: And,

1. As to our duty to *God*, about which conſcience is exerciſed, the juſteſt view we can have of it is, from conſidering the relation in which we ſtand to *God*, as all human virtue or duty conſiſts in our acting towards other beings agreeably to the relation in which we ſtand to them: As therefore, God bears to us, undeniably, the relation of our Creator and Preſerver, to which we may add, that of our Redeemer and Sanctifier, as ſet forth in ſcripture, he has an unqueſtionable right to us, and to our ſervices; from him our all is derived, and to him it ſhould be devoted; ſo that our duty to him, or that about which conſcience is exerciſed, extends to theſe three particulars; *knowledge*, *worſhip* and *obedience*.

Firſt, As to what reſpects our *knowledge* of *God*; *Conſcience* points it out to us as our duty, that we uſe the powers and advantages he has given us, either all in common, or each in particular, for informing ourſelves, as far as our preſent ſtate will admit, of his nature, perfections, and the manifeſtations he has made of his will, either in a natural or ſupernatural way to mankind, and, upon acquainting ourſelves in ſome meaſure with theſe, it is our duty, by frequent and ſerious reflection on them, to impreſs our minds with ſuch an abiding ſenſe of them, as may be ever preſent with us for enlivening our affections and influencing our conduct towards him.

In conſequence of our having ſuch a devout ſenſe and impreſſion of theſe, it follows:

Secondly, that we are to pay him thoſe acts of *worſhip* and homage, which we thus ſee to be due to him, in the relations mentioned, and, according to the knowledge obtained of him, as a Being poſſeſſed of all poſſible perfections, ever exerciſed by him for the general good and welfare of his creatures, who depend upon his providence and grace for all that they do or can enjoy; ſuch acts of worſhip due to him may be conſidered as *external* or *internal*; and the chief of them are, *prayer* to him for what

what we *want*, and *praiſe* to him for what we *have*. The

Third branch of our duty to *God*, as intimated to us by *Conſcience*, is *obedience* (which, in the preſent condition of human nature, includes *repentance*) that is, ſerving or obeying him, according to the knowledge we have got of his will, either by the light of nature or revelation; our obligation to which flows from our relation to and dependence upon him, with his conſequent right to us, in the different ways formerly mentioned; from his having given us a being, and free powers of acting, ſo that we muſt be *accountable* to him for the uſe we make of them; as alſo, from the ſanctions of *rewards* and *puniſhments*, enforcing his law, and to be diſpenſed on giving him an account of our obedience.

Thus far does the province of *Conſcience* extend, in what reſpects our duty to *God*. The other great

Second branch of our duty, and to which *Conſcience* extends, is that which has reſpect to *men*, and which is likewiſe to be deduced from a view of the *relations*, either general or particular, in which we ſtand to them; more *generally* theſe are, our being all the offſpring of one common parent, partakers of the ſame common nature, members of the ſame body or ſyſtem. The duties ariſ-

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ing from this general relation, which we all, as men, bear to one another, may be reduced to theſe two general heads, *equity* and *love*.

1*ſt*, *Equity*, that is, ſuch an equality in our views, ſentiments, and conduct, with reſpect to *others*, ſuch a ſubſtitution of ourſelves in their caſes, and compariſon of them with our own, as will direct both our feelings and actings with reſpect to them, and lead us to judge of them and deal with them, in the ſame manner that we think they ought to do as to us, in like caſes and circumſtances: Every one is ready to acknowledge the reaſonableneſs of this rule; and, were we but equally ready to apply it to practice, there is no circumſtance of life we can be engaged in, in which it would not direct our conduct with reſpect to others. The

Second branch of our duty to men, and that from which every kind office proceeds, is *Love*, or the bearing them ſuch a degree of affection, as is ſuited to the general or particular relation in which we ſtand to them, and endeavouring, by the exerciſe of *univerſal benevolence and charity*, to promote their happineſs to the utmoſt of our power, according to the ſeveral *circumſtances* in which they and we are placed, and our

conſequent

conſequent *relations* to one another juſt now mentioned.

This, therefore, may ſuffice for giving ſuch a general view of the *province* or *office* of *Conſcience*, and objects about which it is exerciſed, as may (with the addition of what ſhall be offered on the two remaining queſtions) enable us, without much caſuiſtry, to judge of the morality of our own actions, and form ſuch meaſures of conduct for ourſelves, as are ſuited to the relations in which we ſtand to *God* and to *men*. The

V. *Queſtion*, with reſpect to *Conſcience*, is, Wherein the *regard* due to it conſiſts, and how far its *judgment juſtifies*?

If we conſider what has been already advanced on this ſubject, with reſpect to the nature and operations of Conſcience, and the objects about which it is exerciſed, we ſhall find that the *regard* due to it conſiſts in theſe two particulars,

1. *Informing* it carefully, by a proper and previous exerciſe of *reaſon*, examining the nature and tendency of actions. And,

2. *Following* ſteadily its directions, when thus *informed*, or regulating our conduct by it, as it was for this end, we ſaw, that it was given us.

Theſe two particulars, the *informing* and *following* or obeying *Conſcience*, we ſhall endeavour

deavour to explain a little further, and ſhall thereupon be enabled to determine how far its approbation juſtifies.

1. Then, by *informing Conſcience*, is meant a fair and diligent exerciſe of our reaſon, for examining the nature or tendency of any action we are in doubt about; that we may know how far it is *agreeable* to what we ſaw was our duty to God or man, and ſo to be approved and performed as *good*, or *contrary* to it, and ſo to be condemned and avoided as *evil*, or, in fine, neither commanded nor forbidden, and therefore *indifferent*.

This is the *information* neceſſary to be given Conſcience before it can paſs a right judgment on our actions; nor will it be ſuch a difficult matter as may at firſt be thought: To inform ourſelves thus in every circumſtance of life in which we can be engaged, or, at leaſt, in which we can have any doubt about the lawfulneſs of our actions, *God* has given us ſufficient means of information with reſpect to them, and has ſo ordered our ſituation, that, however high our ſphere of life may be, the ſame actions or meaſures of conduct recur to be often practiſed; ſo that informing ourſelves once with reſpect to them is ſufficient, while the circumſtances continue the ſame, and ſuch *principles* or *rules* of conduct, as we

we are once in our own Conſcience ſatisfied about, may afterwards be ſteadily proceeded upon, without new inquiries in every particular inſtance that occurs; but the more ſteadily we reſolve to follow theſe rules of conduct, without the labour of new inquiries, the more reaſon have we for being at the utmoſt pains in examining them, before we lay them down as maxims to walk by; and particularly, we would need to beware, leſt paſſion, intereſt, prejudice, ſelf-partiality, or the like, determine us in forming our opinions of the good or evil of actions; for theſe can never alter the *nature* of *things*, as, in themſelves, right or wrong.

We obſerved already, that conſcience may be ſaid to hold the place of *judge* in our minds; how then can we expect that its ſentence ſhould be juſt and fair, if the evidence given it be not ſo likewiſe? in fine, though the difficulty of thus *informing Conſcience*, were much greater than it is, it muſt be undergone, if we would either approve ourſelves to our ſupreme Judge, or even ſave our own minds the tortures that ariſe from a diſcovery of any former errors, which we might by greater care have avoided: There are, alas! too many inſtances, in all ages, of the diſmal effects of men's acting even from conſcience, though one of the nobleſt and moſt neceſſary principles implanted

implanted in the human breaſt; the caſe here is the ſame as with many other things uſeful and valuable to us, the more uſeful and neceſſary they are, when well regulated and applied, the more hurtful and pernicious do we find the ſame things to be, when ill managed or applied; thus it is with conſcience, it may be called the *guide* of human life, but, if it is miſinformed or inſtructed in the wrong way, we muſt be in as bad a caſe, or worſe, than if we had no guide at all: The execrable practices of the Jews will be a laſting monument of the fatal effects of judgments thus miſled; in many acts of inhumanity committed by them, ſome of them might have acted from conſcience, and have had it, in ſome meaſure, void of offence; but as a well informed conſcience, void of offence, is the higheſt human attainment, and carries heaven and happineſs along with it, ſo a miſinformed and miſled conſcience void of offence, if ſaid to be attended with any kind of happineſs or tranquillity, it muſt be the moſt melancholy and undeſireable we can conceive, like that of a blind man walking careleſly on the brink of a precipice, or of one who ſleeps ſecurely in a houſe on fire, ready every moment to be awakened amidſt the rage of mercileſs flames.

Thus then we ſee in what manner *Conſcience* ſhould be *informed* with reſpect to the nature, tendency, and obligation of our actions, and the neceſſity of thus *informing* it, if we would have the comfort ariſing from its approbation at preſent, without any danger of fatal conſequences to follow its ſecurity hereafter.

2. The other thing we obſerved to be neceſſary in order to our paying a proper regard to *Conſcience*, is, that when we have thus taken all due pains to inform it, we ſteadily *follow* its directions, or regulate our conduct by it: We need not take up much time in explaining this; all that is implied in it is, that, agreeably to the knowledge we have got of our duty to God and man, and the conſequent rules or meaſures of conduct we have laid down and approved, we do, in every circumſtance of life, regulate our behaviour; attending carefully to what our own minds direct us, to as right; there is no reaſon to fear that *Conſcience* will neglect its office, or fail to direct us, at the very firſt, agreeably to the information it receives; but the great ſource of our miſcarriages in life is, that, when *Conſcience* thus ſpeaks to us, if it oppoſes our prevailing deſires and inclinations, we endeavour to ſilence it by force, or ſoothe it by ſome falſe reaſonings till the paſſion is gratified; then indeed we perhaps

perhaps become calm and ſober, and are forced to hear and feel it, but we hear it in accents of terror reproaching and condemning us, we feel it wounded by our neglect, and, in revenge, preying on our vitals. It has indeed good reaſon to complain when diſregarded, for its judgment is founded upon an *intimate* knowledge of our actions, and the true ſprings and ends of them; ſo that, though other men may, through ignorance of theſe, condemn or approve of us unjuſtly, it does not; its judgment is *impartial*, it is not like to be unfavourable to ourſelves, if we pay a proper regard to it, nor indeed will it flatter us; in a word, its judgment is free from all *compulſion*, and can be forced by none but as we ourſelves give cauſe for it.

Here however it muſt be obſerved, that, even in paying the regard to conſcience, which we have been recommending as neceſſary to happineſs, there may be a *ſcrupulous exactneſs* and delicacy, very unfriendly to our own happineſs, and that of others whom we are connected with: This is indeed, an error we ſeldom fall into, but as it may and does happen ſometimes, we ſhall endeavour here to deſcribe it, in order to our being on our guard againſt it.

From what has already been ſaid with reſpect to conſcience, we ſee, that its office

conſiſts in theſe three particulars; in leading us to approve what is good, to condemn what is evil, and to be entirely *indifferent* about what appears to be in itſelf *neither good nor evil*, that is, neither to approve or condemn it; hence it follows that there is alſo a threefold miſapplication of the office of conſcience when it is ill informed, namely, That it may judge that to be good which is evil, that to be evil which is good, and that to be good or evil which is in its own nature *indifferent*; and purſue or avoid it accordingly.

The two firſt of theſe miſtakes, by calling good evil, and evil good, we ſometimes ſee and condemn in one another, as ariſing from a wrong information of conſcience with reſpect to the nature of the things judged of. The third miſtake is what we here take notice of, the reckoning things to be good or evil which are in their own nature *indifferent*, neither commanded nor forbidden; from which falſe notion of them, ariſes that miſtaken *delicacy* and *ſcrupulouſneſs* which we blame in ſome, who ſeem to make things matter of conſcience that are in themſelves neither good nor evil: This we plainly ſee ariſes, as the other miſtakes mentioned, from want of due care in informing our own minds as to what is really right or wrong, commanded

or

or forbidden; and, as it lays in a very unneceſſary fund of anxiety and uneaſineſs for ourſelves, by making us as earneſt in the purſuit and performance of theſe indifferent things, and as unhappy when we fail of them as if they were of the greateſt moral or religious importance; every one muſt ſee how much it is his intereſt either to prevent or avoid ſuch miſtaken notions of things; which can be done only by what has been already recommended, by enquiring diligently into the nature and tendency of the things we thus judge of, that we may inform ourſelves how far they are really good or evil, commanded or forbidden either by reaſon or revelation, or entirely indifferent, and purſue or avoid, approve or condemn them accordingly.

It was for want of ſuch an examination as this, and from their conſequent attachment to things in themſelves trivial and indifferent, that the Jews are charged by our Saviour with omitting, on their account, the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: Such is the narrowneſs of our minds, that too many purſuits diſtract our attention, ſo that in this, as well as in other reſpects, whoever is encumbered about many things is in great danger of neglecting the moſt needful; the caſe here is the ſame as with a delicate palate, which,

by too great nicety in the choice of food, threatens almoſt the ſame ruin to the conſtitution which an undiſtinguiſhing taſte does, that makes no difference at all between what is wholeſome and what is not.

After thus giving ſome account of the regard and obedience due to conſcience, we propoſed further, on this queſtion, to conſider *how far its approbation juſtifies an action.*

It is no uncommon thing to ſee very oppoſite actions approved and performed from the ſame principle of conſcience, and the innocence of error thence maintained; it can never be ſuppoſed that theſe oppoſite actions are in themſelves equally good and juſtifiable; and, if they be not, their goodneſs (it will perhaps be ſaid) muſt be judged of by ſome other ſtandard than a principle ſo variable as conſcience would thus appear to be.

In order to a ſolution of this difficulty, we muſt conſider whether any *other powers* of the mind be exerciſed about an object previouſly to conſcience's judging of it, and ſee if the variety may not ly in the exerciſe of theſe more than in that of *Conſcience.*

When therefore any object of a moral nature is preſented to the mind, in order to its being approved or diſapproved of, purſued or avoided, if it be an *ultimate end,*

it

it may be granted that conſcience is immediately, and without the previous operation of any other principle or faculty, exerciſed with reſpect to it, by approving or condemning it; and in this inſtance its determinations are the ſame in all men; they approve and diſapprove of the ſame ultimate ends: But, if the object be only a *mean*, or *ſubordinate end*, before conſcience judges of it, ſome other powers are employed, as *reaſon*, in inquiring into the nature of the object, and its tendency to the ultimate end, the concluſions of which may in different perſons be very different, according to their degrees of attention, diligence, and the like: It may judge an object to be conducive to the ultimate end when it is not; and on this concluſion or *information of reaſon* is founded the *approbation* of *Conſcienee*, which never fails to approve or diſapprove of the object after the ſame manner in all men, if they have the ſame views of its nature and tendency. From which theſe two *inferences* may be drawn in anſwer to this part of the queſtion:

1. That men's *differing* ſo much in their opinions and approbation of actions, is rather an argument againſt their *reaſon* than againſt their *conſcience*'s doing its duty uniformly and ſteadily. And

2. That

2. That even the *approbation* of a man's *conſcience* does not *juſtify* an action, unleſs it be rightly *informed* by a previous exerciſe of his *reaſon* and underſtanding in examining its nature and tendency.

VI. After conſidering the nature, importance, ends and office of conſcience, with the regard due to it, as ſet furth under the preceeding queſtions; one other inquiry may be added for enabling us to conſult and follow it with ſafety in the numberleſs variety of caſes that may occur, and that is, *How we may know when it is properly exerciſed, and the regard mentioned properly paid to it?*

For giving ſome ſatisfaction therefore as to this part of our inquiry, we ſhall lay down ſome *marks* or *evidences*, by which we may judge how far we really *act from conſcience*, or if (as is too often the caſe,) we miſtake ſome leſs commendable principle for it; for though all men profeſs to act from conſcience, it is plain they take very different and even oppoſite ways in doing it, and in ſome caſes perhaps, every one thinks his own way the only right one.

Amidſt all this contrariety therefore, and difference of principles and practices in following this great guide of human life, *Conſcience*, it muſt certainly be of great conſequence

conſequence to every one of us, to lay down to himſelf ſome general, unalterable, and if poſſible, univerſally approved *marks*, by which he may walk ſafely, and know whether he be really following *Conſcience*, or if he be following his paſſion, humour, intereſt, prejudice, and the like, as we have reaſon to fear is often the caſe.

There are ſix *marks* by which we may know when *Conſcience* operates, and wherever theſe are wanting, there is reaſon to fear it is not conſcience that directs, but ſome of the other principles juſt now mentioned. Theſe are,

1. That *Conſcience* is always *diſintereſted* in its proceedings. 2. It acts *calmly* and compoſedly without paſſion. 3. It deals *impartially*, and condemns as well as approves. 4. It is always *teachable*, *humble*, and willing to be inſtructed. 5. It is *peaceful* and ever mindful of the great duties formerly mentioned. And laſtly, It diſpoſes us to think as charitably or *favourably* as poſſible of the ſentiments and actions of others.

Theſe we ſhall explain a little further.

1. (I ſay) *Conſcience* may be known by the *diſintereſtedneſs* of its proceedings: If, therefore, we *wiſh* any opinion to be true, or any action to be lawful and right, before we have at all examined and found it to be

be ſo, it is a ſhrewd ſign that we act from ſome other motive than a love of truth and regard to Conſcience, that we have a partial eye to ſomething elſe which will be in great danger of byaſſing our judgment. We ought, therefore, in all our conſcientious enquiries and deliberations to beware of leaning too much to that ſide, to which our wiſhes or inclinations carry us, and to diveſt ourſelves, as much as poſſible, of all theſe partial views and affections, which may blind our reaſon and pervert our judgment, and if, upon carefully examining ourſelves, we find that we do ſo, we may look upon it as a ſure mark of our acting according to Conſcience. The

2. Mark of our doing ſo in any caſe is, if we find ourſelves reaſoning, deliberating and acting with *calmneſs* and *compoſure*, with a temper of mind eaſy to ourſelves and others, this ſhews that we are not determined by paſſion, as the former mark did our not being determined by intereſt; a furious turbulent diſpoſition, either in arguing or acting, is the moſt diſtant thing in the world from that calm cool ſtate of mind, which a man feels himſelf in when his Conſcience operates and ſeems truly ſatisfied with his manner of proceeding. A

3. Mark of our giving due attention to the dictates of Conſcience is, that we find

it

it dealing *impartially* and ſometimes remonſtrating againſt us; ſuch is our preſent imperfection and corruption, that a compleat obedience, even to the dictates of his own unprejudiced reaſon and Conſcience, is what no man here arrives at, though it be every man's duty to endeavour it; whoever therefore has never felt his Conſcience *reproving* him, may be aſſured, that either he has not been attentive to it, or that its judgment is too much biaſſed in his own favour, and muſt be corrected before it can be a fair and impartial guide of his life. If we have a juſt ſenſe of our own failings and imperfections, we cannot but have ſome ſuſpicion of the partiality, weakneſs or treachery of a profeſſed friend who never reproves us at all, but ſeems entirely pleaſed with all that we do or ſay; whereas a judicious mixture of reproofs and commendations, according to our conduct, juſtly raiſes our confidence in him: Whoever, therefore, finds his Conſcience dealing thus *impartially* with him, may take it for an infallible mark of its doing its office, and of his being in ſome meaſure attentive to it, even though he fails of the uniform regard and obedience due to it: Hence follows a

4. Mark of being conſcientious or acting from Conſcience, namely, the finding ourſelves *humble* and *teachable*, ever open to

to information and conviction from others, according to the evidence and reaſon with which they ſupport their admonitions. A mind full of itſelf, full of pride and ſelf-conceit; has no room for receiving due information, and cannot do Conſcience juſtice in laying the proper evidence before it; no wonder therefore if it ſhould in this caſe fail of being a competent guide to action. A

5. Mark is, that whoever does not follow the things that make for *peace*, and does not pay regard to thoſe great ends, thoſe unqueſtionable points formerly mentioned, which reſpect our *duty* to *God* and *man*, does not pay a juſt regard to his Conſcience, for theſe are the objects to which it principally has reſpect, nor will the ſtricteſt attention to leſſer matters make up for the neglect of them.

6. The laſt mark mentioned of a man's acting according to *Conſcience* is, that the more he does ſo himſelf, he will be apt to think the more charitably and favourably of others as doing the ſame; the reaſon of which is, not only men's common diſpoſition to judge of others by themſelves, even when they are not aware of it, but likewiſe, that, whoever has fairly and conſcientiouſly examined the chief points in which he differs from others, either as to opinion or practice, will find that there is a good deal of weight

even

even in the reaſons againſt himſelf, and conſequently make ſome allowance for others, who are determined by them, even though their Conſciences appear to him miſinformed and miſled: Any matters of Conſcience in which we differ from one another, muſt always be ſuppoſed to have ſome reaſons on both ſides, determining us according to our attention and care in conſidering them, unleſs where the *great foundations* of *natural* and *revealed religion* are concerned, in which either demonſtration or the higheſt moral evidence * takes place; in theſe indeed it muſt be owned that nothing but either ignorance or a criminal inattention on one ſide or another can hinder all men from thinking alike and acting accordingly.

* It will eaſily be ſeen, that even by this is not meant an irreſiſtible evidence, which would take away all excellence from *faith*: Any truth is ſufficiently recommended to our faith, if it has ſuch evidence as to deſerve our belief or aſſent, though not ſuch as to extort it; for, even here, ſome degree of liberty muſt be admitted, and the liberty that takes place in matters of faith ſeems to lie in the power of attending or not attending to the evidence offered us, rather than in giving or with-holding our aſſent when it is offered, or in a power of believing without any regard to evidence at all.

DISSERTATION II.

On EXPERIENCE.

THOUGH much may be reaſonably objected to Mr Lock's opinion, and that of ſome others, who would have the human mind, in its beginning, to be a mere *tabula raſa*, without any ideas, principles, or impreſſions; yet it cannot be denied, that, when we trace back our own progreſs, in various branches of improvement, we find ourſelves ſo much indebted to *Experience*, obſervation and inſtruction, that were we to ſuppoſe even the genius of a *Newton* or *Archimedes* to be entirely cut off from theſe aſſiſtances, ſo far as they ariſe from any intercourſe with others, we could have no great expectation of their ſucceſs, in any branch of ſcience, that reſpects either the ornament or accommodation of human life. It would indeed, in ſuch a caſe, be leſs needed; our intercourſe with others begets wants and excites deſires, which otherwiſe we would have been ſtrangers to; but it likewiſe awakens our induſtry and emulation, and unſpeakably increaſes the force of all our active powers, for obtaining what is thus made neceſſary or important to us.

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Our obſervation of others, and inſtruction from them, have a powerful effect in this way; but let us receive never ſo many inſtructions, or lay down never ſo many rules, we ſhall find that our improvement will proceed but ſlowly, if *experience* and reflection are not joined, experience repeated in a variety of circumſtances, and reflection applying it to theſe, and extending it to more.

Uſeful knowledge is to the mind what food is to the body. but while ſuch knowledge is only in idea, it is not ſo far brought home to the mind, as is neceſſary to its being formed, nouriſhed, and invigorated by it; to bring it thus home, or make a proper application of it for theſe purpoſes, *experience* and *reflection* muſt be added to *inſtruction* and *obſervation*, and, when they are thus added, any man muſt be ſenſible what a different impreſſion is made, and what a different view is got, of all that was formerly the ſubject, only of theory and abſtract contemplation; he ſees it as it were in a different light, and very probably ſees, that all the knowledge he had before was very imperfect; that the ſubject or ſcience he once thought himſelf fully acquainted with, has many windings or intricacies formerly unthought of, and varieties of poſition which could never be ſtudied, foreſeen,

or diſcovered till brought to the touchſtone of *experience*.

To ſay, with Mr *Hume*, that our belief of the connection of cauſe and effect, together with ſome other clear deductions of reaſon, or rather intuitive perceptions of common ſenſe, are drawn only from experience, would be ſaying too much; nor will it be eaſy to avoid the imputation of a very dangerous ſpecies of ſcepticiſm, in matters of faith, if the object of it muſt be always reduced to the comprehenſion of reaſon, and much more if it muſt be confined to the narrow limits of human experience; but in every branch of knowledge, that has relation to practice, and particularly, in what reſpects the conduct, the convenience, the ſupport and embelliſhment of life, it will be found, that, however neceſſary it is to lay a foundation in reaſon, yet it is, when experience is joined to reaſoning and reflection, that the ſuperſtructure is ſucceſsfully carried on, and accommodated to any uſeful or important purpoſes.

That, in order to any kind of improvement, becoming us as men, ſomething more is neceſſary, than the exerciſe of our ſenſible or bodily powers, cannot be denied; otherwiſe, inferior and irrational animals, might excel us in it, for they have theſe powers much more lively and acute than we have: Wherein

Wherein then lies our ſuperiority to them, as men? for we come into the world as ignorant as they; our ſuperiority lies in this, that, though at firſt equally deſtitute of knowledge we are more capable of attaining it, capable, not only of perceiving, but of examining and comparing objects, of making ſuch trials and experiments, with reſpect to their nature, properties, and effects, as are neceſſary in order to their being made uſeful to us, of comparing our various trials and experiences one with another, reflecting on them, and reaſoning with reſpect to them in ſuch a manner as may enable us to extend our inquiry and experience farther, and make them ſubſervient to every ſpecies of improvement of which we are capable.

I would wiſh to conſider this ſubject in ſuch a manner, as may be of ſome benefit to myſelf and others; and, in order to this, ſhall,

I. Endeavour to ſet forth the manner in which *experience*, aided by proper reflection, is made ſubſervient to thoſe *branches* of *improvement*, which are conſidered as of moſt importance in life.

II. Take notice of a few *queſtions*, that may ariſe with reſpect to it, and

Conclude, with laying down ſome general *canons* or *maxims* neceſſary to be attended

to, in order to our profiting by experience, in all the branches of improvement that ſhall be mentioned.

1. Then, it may be of uſe to conſider the manner in which *experience*, aided by proper reflection, is made ſubſervient to theſe *branches* of *improvement* which are moſt important in life, and which cannot, in any other way, be ſo ſucceſsfully conducted.

To begin with *phyſical knowledge* and improvement, both as it reſpects natural knowledge in general, and that of the human body in particular, its functions, diſeaſes, and the remedies ſuited to them; it cannot be denied, that there is ſome room for *theory* and reaſoning, according to the knowledge we have of theſe laws and elementary principles which we reaſon from: but, in conſequence of the modern diſcoveries with reſpect to theſe, might it not be expected, that our progreſs in phyſical improvement, would have been much more rapid than before? and yet, with all our preſent helps, in the way of theory and reaſoning, we do not find this to be the caſe for our moſt uſeful diſcoveries, are we not indebted, either to *ſeeming accidents*, or to the labours of thoſe, who had only *experience* * for their guide? nor is it likely

* We are indebted to the native Americans for many valuable medicines, as the Peruvian Bark, Ipecacuan, &c.

likely that in our preſent ſtate, our knowledge of nature ſhall ever be ſo complete as that we may expect to reap the ſame benefit from theory alone, as from experiments or trials properly varied, repeated, and reflected on.

Mechanical knowledge is very nearly allied to that which we have been juſt now conſidering; it has its foundation in a few very ſimple laws, to which matter and motion are ſubject; as gravity, attraction, the equal preſſure of fluids and the like; but any perfection it is brought to, or facility in applying it to practice, ariſes from the well conducted *experience* of thoſe whoſe ingenuity and induſtry have been employed for this purpoſe.

Agriculture and *commerce* draw moſt of their importance from the ſame ſource: Any acquaintance I have with the former, convinces me, that many ſchemes of improvement which promiſe very fair in theory, may miſgive in practice, and that, perhaps, thro' inattention to ſome circumſtances that appear trivial, till experience diſcovers their importance; ſo that I would chuſe rather to commit the management of my ſmall farm to an illiterate plowman who had experience, than to a *Tull* or a *Mortimer*, without it.

And

And as for *commercial* improvement (in which *manufactures* may be included) tho' it be now more than ever reduced to a ſcience (by the management of exchange, without regard to coin or ſpecie, and the union, as it were, of many independent ſtates in one great commercial ſociety) yet, ſtill we find, that every branch of trade or commerce proceeds with much more ſucceſs, after paſſing ſome apprenticeſhip to *experience*.

The ſcience of *politics* deſerves ſome notice, and the *adepts* in it would be more numerous than in any other, did not inexperience cut off ſo many; ſo that the mutability of their ſyſtems, and frequent fallacy of their reaſonings, muſt raiſe ſome diffidence of the ſucceſs of every ſcheme, that is not either warranted, ſupported, or ſome way recommended by *experience*.

In the *military art* the caſe is often different; there have been many inſtances of ſucceſs, where the enterpriſe was not thus recommended: Fortune (as we commonly ſay) is a female, and ſometimes favours the young and inexperienced in a military way; but in ſuch inſtances of ſucceſsful temerity, the character of the troops deſerves ſome notice as well as that of the commander; and how ſeldom has it been found, that thoſe who were raw and undiſciplined, equalled the valour of the veterans?

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The art of *prudence* may be here likewiſe brought under review, or that ſpecies of improvement which may be called *prudential*, and which, having relation to the common tenor of our conduct, may likewiſe be denominated the *ſcience of human life*; it conſiſts in a juſt diſcernment of the propriety of actions and characters, with their various events and effects, determining us in different circumſtances, to approve and chuſe that which will be, in the iſſue, moſt conducive to our true intereſt. There is no caſe, in which the man of experience (eſpecially if aſſiſted by a little reflection) has more advantage than in this; from a recollection of former caſes and circumſtances, he judges of the conſequences of theſe he is in at preſent, and has his hopes or his fears awakened accordingly; he ſees ſometimes danger, where the inexperienced are not aware of it, and, at other times, a way of extricating himſelf, unknown to them. Could we improve in prudence, by the experiences of others, it would often ſave us much trouble and diſappointment, but it is remarkable, that theſe generally ſerve us little in ſtead: Every man muſt learn for himſelf, or at his own expence, every man muſt go to the ſchool of *experience*; the inſtruction he might get at ſecond hand from others, who have been there, will not ſatisfy

ſatisfy him. Tho' we have all heard how dangerous it is, to contract friendſhips with the ſelfiſh, to commit our ſecrets to thoſe who cannot keep their own, to delay till to-morrow, what we may as eaſily do to day, or to do by another what we can eaſily do ourſelves, with many other ſuch maxims of *prudence*, yet how few are there who profit by them, till their own *experience* convinces them of their importance?

The only other ſpecies of improvement we ſhall mention, as likewiſe influenced and promoted by experience, is *moral* and *religious* improvement, or that which has more immediate reſpect to the habits of virtue and devotion, the improvement neceſſary for immortality. The whole of our preſent ſtate, may, indeed, juſtly be conſidered as a ſtate of trial, diſcipline and education, with a view to this, and *experience* is our common tutor: Guided by this, through many varieties of life, the mind is gradually formed for ſuperior bleſſedneſs: Reaſon and conſcience (faculties which may be called celeſtial, in their extract and tendency) are exerciſed in drawing improvement from experience, and are aſſiſted by the outward light of revelation, to which we have reaſon to expect that inward aid and illumination ſhall be added, when humbly and devoutly implored, tho' communicated in ſuch

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a way, as does not ſuperſede the exerciſe of the faculties now mentioned; but falls in with their natural progreſs and improvement.

The manner in which *experience* is made ſubſervient to that *religious* and *moral* improvement we are now ſpeaking of, may be eaſily explained; to it we owe that knowledge of ourſelves, which is of all human knowledge the moſt important, and which requires our undergoing different trials in different circumſtances, before the health and vigour of the mind can either be known or eſtabliſhed: Hence we may ſee the reaſon why *morality* and *religion* are always taught with moſt ſucceſs, by thoſe who ſpeak from their own *experience*, to the experiences of others; as might be exemplified in the exerciſe of truſt in God, patience, temperance, humility, fortitude, and every virtuous or devout diſpoſition: In chuſing a phyſician, whom we would conſult for our health, we would not heſitate to give him the preference, whoſe *experience* extended moſt to our own caſe; and, for the ſame reaſon, in what reſpects the health and improvement of our minds, the correcting wrong habits, ſubduing unruly paſſions, and regulating the whole inward temper and outward deportment, no wonder if we expected moſt aſſiſtance and direction

rection from thoſe whoſe *experience* we found to be moſt extended, diverſified, and ſuited to our own; always ſuppoſing it, in this and the other inſtances mentioned, to be accompained with ſuch reflection as is neceſſary to its making a proper impreſſion on the mind, and being applied or brought home, with advantage, to our various caſes.

II. After enumerating the various kinds of improvement to which *Experience* is conducive, ſome notice may be taken of a few QUESTIONS that may ariſe with reſpect to it. The

1ſt We ſhall mention is of a more general nature, reſpecting the manner in which it operates. How, may it be aſked, does it come to have ſuch efficacy, and how may we know our being profited by it? A little attention to the manner in which it proceeds, will clear the whole of this. Firſt, it is remarkable, that *Experience increaſes caution*; many an important enterprize has miſcarried for want of attention to ſome minute circumſtances that could eaſily have been ſet right, had they not, through inexperience, been conſidered as of too little importance to be attended to. A handful of men properly poſted, would have prevented the taking of Babylon by Cyrus. A ſhort retreat into the plains of Media, would have made Alexander an eaſy prey

to

to Darius. Want of a very little more acquaintance with the conſtruction and uſe of fire-arms, hinders the modern Aſiatic troops from being a match for Europeans; and, as ſucceſs often depends upon ſecrecy, I have known an expedition, of no ſmall importance, miſcarry by the accidental firing of a ſingle muſket.

In any of theſe inſtances, had the caſe been ſuch as to have often recurred, and given occaſion of learning, inſtruction, and *caution* from *Experience*, theſe minute circumſtances would probably have been attended to, and many incidents will occur in hiſtory to exemplify the importance of this; but it is, when *Experience* confirms it, that caution is extended even to thoſe leſſer matters which are often overlooked; the man of experience will not overlook even what is ſeemingly ſmall, if it may have important conſequences; he is not apt to promiſe moſt on his own ſucceſs, but he always labours moſt to ſecure it.

But this uſeful *caution*, which is increaſed by *Experience*, is, by no means, to be confounded with that *ſuſpicion*, jealouſy, and timidity, which are unmanly and hurtful, and which, when groundleſs, are rather the natural effects of inexperience, magnifying danger, and inattentive to the means of averting it.

Again, it may be remarked, as another effect of *Experience*, that it leſſens *admiration* and *credulity*: Events, actions, and characters, which are objects of much *admiration* to the ignorant and inexperienced, ceaſe to be ſo, when experience takes place; as might be exemplified in the calculation of eclipſes, the conſtruction of mechanical engines, and the like, which we come to wonder leſs at, upon acquaintance with the laws and principles on which they proceed; nay the frequency, and much more the regularity of the return of any event or object, even though we cannot thus account for it, leſſens our *admiration*, elſe the ebbing and flowing of the ſea, the congealing of fluids by froſt, the origin of winds and meteors, and many other phenomena in the natural world, which we cannot account for, would excite more of admiration; ſo that, it would not ſeem to ariſe ſo much from ignorance, as from inexperience: It is not ſo much the unaccountableneſs as the uncommonneſs of any event or object which occaſions it: Nothing can be more unaccountable than the effects of lightning and electricity, and yet, when they become common, or when we have frequent experience of them, we ceaſe to wonder at them. Was thunder more common, it would occaſion leſs wonder and dread; (for theſe two are nearly

nearly allied;) nay, I remember my being told by a gentleman who was in Liſbon, at a time when the ſhocks of earthquakes were moſt frequent there, that, on his ſeeming once to be ſtruck with the apprehenſion of his feeling one, a lady in the company, who was more accuſtomed to them, calmly adviſed him not to be alarmed, for it was *only* an earthquake.

Even women and children may thus become familiar with danger, and yet, through their want of *Experience* they are generally moſt liable to wonder, ſurprize, and dread: For the ſame reaſon, they are likewiſe moſt liable to *credulity*, which always leſſens as *Experience* increaſes, and hinders our confounding what is *marvellous* with what is *miraculous*; theſe two are very different from one another, but it is experience and reflection that enable us to diſtinguiſh them, by extending the former to whatever is *uncommon*, and limiting the latter to what is plainly *unaccountable* by any laws or powers of nature known to us; for, to admit nothing of this kind, to admit of nothing miraculous, would be denying, that in any caſe, theſe laws and powers of nature, ever were or could be counteracted by a ſupernatural agent, which is going againſt reaſon and experience: It argues indeed both credulity and inexperience, to ſuppoſe that

they ſhould be thus counteracted or interrupted often, and without great and wiſe ends; but to ſay, that in no caſe they ſhould be ſo, is the language, not only of incredulity, but of a criminal ſcepticiſm and infidelity.

Another effect of *Experience* and mark of our profiting by it, is, its leſſening, not only *admiration* (as now mentioned) but *vanity*. The young, the giddy, the unexperienced, are moſt liable to this; but ſuch as have a more enlarged acquaintance with perſons and things, with human characters, ends, motives, attainments, and who have had any *Experience* of the inſtability and unſatisfying nature of them all, will not be ſo ready to give way to the workings of *vanity*, ſelf-confidence, and ſelf-importance.

The only other effect of *experience* which I ſhall mention, and evidence of our profiting by it, is its exciting us to *diligence* and *conſtancy*, knowing what difficulties theſe have ſurmounted; how often attainment has exceeded expectation; that, even want of ſucceſs in our firſt endeavours of attaining what is valuable, ſhould not hinder the renewing, repeating and varying our efforts for this purpoſe; that *difficulties* ought not to be confounded with *impoſſibilities*, as any difficulty will always be leſſening according as *experience* increaſes and gives facility.

2*dly*.

2*dly*, *Another queſtion*, as to the doctrine of *experience* is, that if (as is commonly ſaid) it be the effect of *years*, it may be aſked, Whence is it that they have not always *this effect*? Whence is it that we meet with many who reap not ſuch improvement from them, or, at leaſt, not ſo much as others do in leſs time, What is it that occaſions the difference?

To account for this therefore, we may obſerve, that, though time be neceſſary to acquire experience, yet this alone is not ſufficient; there muſt be changes of circumſtances, trials in different poſitions, and, which is ſtill more important, there muſt be a judicious *reflection* on paſt experiences and attention to the preſent, examining, comparing, and improving them; wherever therefore, any of theſe are wanting, when an addition of years (though lengthened out for a whole century) brings no variety, as to action, enjoyment or even ſuffering (for ſome degree of this is of uſe for riveting experience) and, much more, when the mind is engroſſed and miſled by any wrong paſſion, pride, prejudice, or an undue attachment to favourite opinions. In all theſe caſes, neither time nor opportunity will be properly improved for acquiring any branch of experience, and profiting by it. A

3*d Queſtion* of ſome nicety is, Whether *experience* or *abilities* avail moſt in the various branches of improvement formerly mentioned? That is, Whether a man of parts, without practice and experience, or a man of experience, without parts, is likely to be moſt ſucceſsful in proſecuting ſuch improvement, and, which of the two would we chuſe to call to our aſſiſtance, or intruſt with the conduct of any ſcheme where our character and intereſt were much concerned?

In anſwer to this, it may be firſt obſerved, that whatever weight either of theſe two have ſeparately, it is not only doubled, but unſpeakably increaſed by their conjunction with one another: But take them ſeparately, and it will probably be found, that, though ſuch branches of improvement, as require moſt of ſtudy and ſpeculation, ſeem to have more dependence on the force of genius and extent of capacity, than on *experience*; yet, in every caſe, where *action* is moſt concerned, *experience* will be found to contribute moſt to our dexterity and ſucceſs. *Lucullus* is indeed often mentioned, as an inſtance of a great general and conqueror, before he came to have experience, but he is ſo mentioned by hiſtorians, becauſe the caſe is thought ſo rare; whereas, there are numberleſs inſtances on the contrary,

of

of parts miſgiving, when deſtitute of experience, wherever activity and addreſs were neceſſary.

I remember to have heard, with ſome amuſement, of an eminent teacher of gunnery and fortification, who, in a ſlight engagement with the rebels, *anno* 1745, took the charge of ſome artillery, but was found more uſeleſs than any of the matroſſes: And likewiſe of another, who taught navigation with great accuracy, but, in a voyage, where he himſelf went paſſenger, he run the veſſel quite out of her courſe. An undertaker of this kind, who, in the ſtrength of his theory alone, launches out into action, will often be as much diſappointed as one who would venture to plunge into the waves, in reliance on his knowing the rules for ſwimming, or one who would undertake to travel without a guide becauſe he had read a map of the country.

Action muſt indeed be ventured on, though with ſome riſk and difficulty, even before *experience* can be acquired, but there will be the more need of caution as to the extent of our undertaking; nor will it proceed ſo ſucceſsfully till ſuch experience is acquired, and practice added to ſpeculation. The geographer will have a clearer idea of any country from a ſhort ſurvey of it, than from all the deſcriptions that were formerly

ly given him. The young orator will improve more by one day's pleading at the bar, than by twenty lectures on rhetorick; and, the ſoldier will learn more of the art of war from one active campaign, than from all the Commentaries of Cæſar, or the Memoirs of the renowned Marlborough.

4*thly*, As we mentioned many branches of improvement, and that no human *experience* can extend equally to them all, it may poſſibly be aſked, Which of them we ſhould prefer, or to which of them our experience ſhould chiefly be directed? This we propoſe as a queſtion, that it may give an opportunity of ſhewing how neceſſary it is to regulate or limit our application to the different purſuits mentioned; as our ſtriving to excel in them *all* may hinder our making much proficiency in *any* of them.

So far as *theory* avails, its being thus extended and diverſified will not indeed be ſo hurtful, nay, it may ſometimes be uſeful to us; but, when it comes to *practice*, if a man expects to be the philoſopher, the phyſician, the mechanic, the farmer, the merchant, the politician, the ſoldier, the divine, all united in one, he will find himſelf much diſappointed, or rather he will find his attention diſtracted, by going from one object and purſuit to another, ſo that he will ſcarcely come to the deſired iſſue in any of them;

them; as the qualities and capacities neceſſary for excelling in ſome of them will, very probably, be hindrances to him in others.

Firſt then, it ſhould be every man's endeavour to underſtand aright *his own buſineſs*, employment, or occupation in life, and to attend both to the *theory* and *practice* of it: The choice of this will probably be determined, either by the bent of his genius, by his ideas of felicity, or perhaps by ſome outward circumſtances independent of his own election or inclination; but, when once it is choſen and determined, to this ſhould his *experience* and *ſpeculation* be chiefly directed, by propoſing to himſelf the beſt models or examples of excellency in it, and by a laudable emulation of them. In order thus to improve and excel, reaſoning or theory is neceſſary, but it is not in this that we are generally moſt defective, but in maintaining that activity, ſteadineſs, and uniform application neceſſary for conforming to the theory or rules we are acquainted with, and reducing them with facility to practice.

But, beſides that improvement which has reſpect to our particular profeſſion or buſineſs in life, it muſt be obſerved, that what we call *religious*, *moral*, and even *prudential*, improvement is to be conſidered as neceſſary

neceſſary for all without exception, becauſe it has reſpect to that comfortable and conſiſtent conduct in life on which its happineſs depends, and to that preparation or improvement for another life in which we are all equally intereſted. In the proper exerciſe, therefore, and improvement of our faculties, the proper reſtraint of our appetites, and regulation of our paſſions; in acquiring right habits, and ſuiting our conduct to the various relations and circumſtances in which we are placed; in all theſe conſiſts the practical or experimental improvement now mentioned, both as it has reſpect to the preſent life and to that which is to come.—But there remains a

5*th* Queſtion which may occur on this ſubject, and that is, How may we *become wiſe* by the *experience of others*, and how may we know, if we are in the way of becoming wiſer than we were by *our own*? Were it not that ſomething is learned from the experience of others, and that every new generation has ſome benefit by what thoſe who went before them have diſcovered and experienced, we could not account for mens being any further advanced now in the different branches of improvement formerly mentioned, than they were at firſt; and yet, that they are ſo upon the whole, is undeniable; upon the whole, I ſay, for it muſt

muſt be owned, that there are ſome nations whoſe improvement in theſe reſpects, does not as yet appear to extend much beyond what may be ſuppoſed to have been their ſtate in the beginning; and if we can find out what gave others the advantage over them, it may teach us how improvement is to be made of the *experience of others*.

Very little acquaintance with hiſtory will convince us, that it is not thoſe parts of the world which were moſt improved anciently that appear to be ſo at preſent; many nations might be mentioned, who have undergone remarkable revolutions in this reſpect, as Egypt, Greece, Italy, and many others more remote: Theſe revolutions ſeem, more immediately, to depend upon the different changes they have undergone in reſpect of their religious and civil eſtabliſhments, upon their having more or leſs intercourſe with other nations, and upon ſuch diſcoveries and inventions as appear to be accidental, but in which the particular interpoſition of providence ſeems to be moſt remarkable.

To one or other of theſe cauſes may be aſcribed the progreſs of ſome arts and ſciences, and the downfal of others, which thereupon perhaps became leſs neceſſary. Thus, when there was leſs ſecurity from war, and while the art of it was carried on in

in ſuch a manner, as made places of ſtrength more neceſſary, *architecture* was probably better underſtood than afterwards. By the extenſion of commerce, occaſioning a dependence of one nation upon another, with regulations thereupon unknown before, and ſtill more, by the invention of fire-arms, the whole *military ſyſtem* is altered: To the extenſion of commerce, occaſioned by the diſcovery of the compaſs, may alſo be aſcribed, not only the art of navigation, but likewiſe the introduction of many manufactures, the materials for which could not otherwiſe have been collected.

Some are of opinion, that *muſic* was in greater perfection among the ancients than now, and that it was more ſentimental; but our ignorance of their muſical inſtruments and compoſitions, makes us unable to judge of this. *Statuary* they probably had in greater perfection, while public games, combats and ſpectacles were moſt common; beſides that, any later improvement ſuppoſed by ſome in *painting*, gradually ſuperſedes it. In general, we may ſay, that whatever arts depend only upon ſtrength, ſkill, application or genius were in as great perfection among the ancients as among us; but whatever could receive improvement from the ſeemingly accidental diſcoveries formerly mentioned, and their conſequences, or whatever

ver receives improvement from the genius or ſpirit of the *religion* profeſſed, and civil *government* eſtabliſhed, will probably be found in greater perfection in the Chriſtian world at preſent, than either now or formerly in nations deſtitute of theſe advantages.

But to what are we to aſcribe the great backwardneſs that ſtill appears among ſome uncivilized nations, whoſe hiſtory we read, in reſpect of almoſt all the branches of improvement mentioned?

Beſides the diſadvantages ariſing from the want of thoſe diſcoveries and inventions formerly mentioned, it will probably be found, that their want of that union in ſociety with one another, which elſewhere takes place, is one of the greateſt obſtructions to their improvement: *Social union* may beget wants unknown before, but it makes ample amends by the mutual aſſiſtance, intercourſe and emulation that ariſe from it, and more eſpecially, by the ſecurity it gives a man in reſpect of his perſon and property, and conſequently, encouragement to induſtry and labour, not for bare ſubſiſtence, but likewiſe for the convenience and accommodation of life. Union in ſociety gives a man an opportunity of improving by the experience of his cotemporaries, and when, together with this, there is ſuch an union and acquaintance with former ages, as is

neceſſary in order to their tranſactions being properly traſmitted to us, we have their experience likewiſe to build upon, and hence it is, that the invention of *printing* has given an unſpeakable advantage for improving in all the different ways formerly mentioned, beyond what could be attained in the ages or times preceeding it, and even beyond what theſe can as yet attain, who are ſtrangers to it, eſpecially if they are every way ſtrangers to the uſe of *letters*.

The *ſocial union* mentioned is improved, and the advantages ariſing from it increaſed by the increaſe of *cities*, or the greatneſs of the reſort to them, if under proper regulations; and to this union, together with the ſuperior ſafety, ſubjection to laws, and encouragement to induſtry conſequent on it; as alſo, to the extenſion of commerce and the uſe of letters and printing, we muſt aſcribe the great ſuperiority of ſome nations to others at preſent, in reſpect of the different branches of improvement formerly mentioned. To which we may add, that, in ſuch of them as have reſpect to the temper of the mind, and the conduct of life, that is, in what we call religious, moral, and prudential improvement, the genius of *Chriſtianity*, ſo favourable to the improvement of the heart, in a moral or ſpiritual way, gives an unſpeakable advantage, not to the

mere

mere nominal profeſſors of it, but to thoſe on whom it has its full influence and effect; as being directly oppoſite to that pride, impurity, injuſtice, inſincerity, inhumanity, indolence, and malevolence, which are the greateſt enemies to the real improvement of ſocieties or individuals: This, however, is not what falls under our immediate conſideration at preſent, but the uſe that may be made of what has been ſuggeſted, for teaching us how we are to improve by the *experience of others*.

In order to this, then, we ſee that a proper intercourſe with them is neceſſary; there muſt be a communication of knowledge and ſentiments with thoſe who are our cotemporaries; a proper conveyance of facts from one age to another, and conſequent reflection or reaſoning, with reſpect to them; on this, indeed, on a careful and authentic collection of facts, and an attention to the diſcoveries, the improvements and experiments of others, ſo as to direct and aſſiſt us in our own; on this, I ſay, depends in a great meaſure, our progreſs in the various branches of improvement formerly mentioned: But there muſt be induſtry, candor, or ſome degree of public ſpirit joined to views of private utility, in order to our making ſuch progreſs.

As to *prudential* improvement, in par-

ticular, which has reſpect to the conduct of life, it may perhaps be obſerved, that in this we avail ourſelves leſs of the experience of others, than in any other kind of improvement mentioned; we will not be taught at the expence of others, but muſt pay for every leſſon of inſtruction, before we will put any value on it: How few are there (for inſtance) who value health, peace, plenty liberty, and many other comforts in life, ſo as to uſe the proper means of preſerving them, till they experience the conſequences of being deprived of them? How much unhappineſs might be avoided, was what we ſee of the ill effects of ungoverned paſſion, in the caſe of others, properly brought home to our own? How many misfortunes in families might be leſſened, did we, from the experience of others in the education of their children, learn the ſafeſt way of conducting it? And, how many miſcarriages in life might be prevented, were the wiſe maxims * of *Solomon*, or even of *Seneca* and *Epictetus*, properly attended to.

So far, however, as ſuch wiſdom is to be attained from the *Experience* of *others* in the conduct of life, it muſt be, *firſt* of all, by

* Plato wrote Heroick Verſes, and burnt them as ſoon as he ſaw thoſe of Homer: I am almoſt inclined to do the ſame with ſome writings of mine, when I read theſe here referred to, on the ſame ſubjects.

by a proper exercise of the *imagination*, substituting ourselves, as much as possible, in their case; by a proper acquaintance with, and attention to their experience; by reflection and deliberation, till it is compared with our own, and till the consequences of our actions be in some measure foreseen and weighed. Indolence, precipitancy, and pride, are the greatest hindrances* to our improving by the experience of others, and would therefore need to be particularly guarded against, if we would become wise either by their experience or our own.

To the other part of this question, *viz.* How we may know if we are in the way of becoming wiser by *our own experience*? All that needs be said for answer, in addition to what was offered on the first question, is, that in that species of improvement which was last mentioned, and which has respect to the conduct of life, we are not in the way of becoming wiser, unless there be such a sense of past miscarriages, and of the steps that led to them, as prevents their being repeated, and such a consciousness of rectitude, when, from experience, we know that we are in the right way, as may engage us to persevere

* To mutual hurt by gusts of *Passion* driven,
And suffering more from folly than from fate.
YOUNG.

vere in it, whatever temptations, incitements, or perſuaſion, we may have to the contrary.

The increaſe of wiſdom gathered from *Experience*, is like the increaſe of our years and ſtature, not eaſily attended to or diſcovered till we have made ſome progreſs: But he who, upon reviewing his paſt progreſs in life, finds that ſome temptations, which foiled him formerly, are now eaſily reſiſted; that ſome duties which he reckoned difficult are become delightful to him, and that there are ſome diſtreſſes which he once thought intolerable, to which he is now reconciled; whoever finds diligence and caution increaſed, while ſecurity and ſelf-conceit are diminiſhed, needs not doubt of his having become wiſer by his paſt experience.

But, as to all the other branches of improvement mentioned in a phyſical, mechanical way, &c. we cannot be at a much greater loſs in diſcovering, upon a proper review, how far our *Experience* has availed us, than we can be in diſcovering, from the inſpection of our coffers and accompts, how much richer we are to-day than we were yeſterday, this year than the laſt: Nor is the pleaſure of the ingenious leſs, upon a diſcovery of their progreſs in the former, than that of the avaritious upon a view of the latter. A leſſon of improvement, in any way, that is acquired

quired from our own experience, from, perhaps, accidental diſcoveries, or from repeated trials judiciouſly varied and perſiſted in; if it coſts us dearer, it will ſtick longer to us, and give unſpeakably more of ſatisfaction than what is acquired from the Experience, obſervation, or inſtruction of others.

In diſpenſatories of phyſic, where the ingredients of different medicinal preparations are recited, there are commonly ſome *Canons* ſubjoined, as neceſſary to be attended to in the compoſition of them, and equally applicable to them all: I would gladly follow this method here, and ſubjoin, as was propoſed, by way of

Concluſion, Some *canons* or *maxims*, which, in the courſe of the preceeding inquiry, appear neceſſary to be attended to, in order to our profiting by *Experience*, in the various branches of improvement formerly mentioned.

1. (Then) There muſt be a careful and *diſtinct remembrance* of paſt experiences, in order to improve by them in time coming.

[Hence appears the advantage of *diaries* and daily *memoirs*, to theſe who are engaged in many important ſcenes of life, and an intire forgetfulneſs or inattention in this way, will occaſion a ſpecies of folly and incapacity for the buſineſs of life. We have here ſaid that the remembrance of

paſt

paſt experience would need to be *diſtinct*, in order to improve by it, becauſe the omiſſion or alteration of a ſeemingly ſmall circumſtance, may in ſome caſes, make a very great difference as to the conſequences; ſo that]

2. There muſt be a juſt *compariſon* of *circumſtances* before we can argue from *Experience*, or improve by it.

[Upon his experience, of the benefit got by *Auguſtus* from the uſe of the cold bath, Antonius Muſa preſcribed it to *Marcellus*, but there was ſome difference in the caſes, and the reſult was fatal to the latter.]

3. *Experience* will be moſt uſeful when ſupported or explained by *reaſoning*, but it may have no ſmall uſefulneſs even when it is not.

[The diſcovery of the circulation of the blood enables us to reaſon uſefully, with reſpect to many phenomena in the human conſtitution; but, though the exiſtence or circulation of a nervous fluid has never as yet been aſcertained, and conſequently, there can be no ſuch reaſoning with reſpect to it, yet our experience of the effect of opiates and other nervous medicines, may be of no ſmall uſe to us, even when we cannot account for it.]

4. *Ex-*

4. *Experience* corrects errors of the *imagination* and *ſenſes**, but the *underſtanding* muſt correct its own.

[Many objects appear to the eye and ear to be very near us, which experience ſhows to be diſtant. By experience the illiterate clown comes to know that the reſemblances he ſees of the neighbouring objects in the water, are no more than ſhadows, and, by experience, the wiſe man comes to know that the gaudy vanities of life, which are often ſo finely painted by the imagination, are likewiſe empty ſhadows. Thus may the ſenſes and imagination be corrected by experience, but the *underſtanding* muſt correct itſelf: Though the errors it imbibes may be called its poiſon, yet they are not to be expelled by force, it will not part with them till ſatisfied, from its own examination of them, that they are errors; any change we would work upon it cannot be by compulſion, but by perſuaſion.]

5. *Experience* can extend no farther than the region of *poſſibilities*, but *imagination* ſometimes wanders beyond it.

[Experience teaches us that it is impoſſible that many things which are done by *legerdemain* men can be what they appear, but

* *i. e.* It examines and corrects the perceptions of one ſenſe by thoſe of another, as ſeeing, by feeling in our judgment of the diſtance of objects here mentioned.

but the imagination of the mob will ſometimes lead them to expect their performing what is as impoſſible as that a part ſhould be greater than the whole.]

6. In order to profit by experience it muſt be puſhed with *patience* and *perſeverance*.

[Had Columbus yielded to the impatience and importunities of his mariners, he had never diſcovered America. Had the great and good Mr Boyle been diſcouraged by every unſucceſsful experiment, he had never made ſuch diſcoveries in natural philoſophy, from the air-pump, *&c.* and had Harriſon given up all hopes of diſcovering the longitude in the 20th year of his ſearch, he would not have been ſo liberally rewarded by the public nine years after.]

7. To make *Experience* ſubſervient to the ſucceſs of any ſcience, there muſt be no undue attachment to any favourite *hypotheſis* or *theory*, unſupported.

"*Natura abhorret vacuum*," was an hypotheſis of more than 2000 years ſtanding; conſecrated by its antiquity, it was tranſmitted down ſafely from Ariſtotle to Deſcartes, as an hypotheſis of undoubted verity, till confuted by the diſcovery of the air-pump, and a door thereby opened to many other uſeful diſcoveries which were never before attempted, as being thought abſurd and impoſſible.

In

In the ſame manner an immoderate and unreaſonable attachment to the Ptolemaic ſyſtem of the heavens, however ridiculous it now appears, prevented much credit's being given to Copernicus, and all that improvement in aſtronomy which ariſes from the confirmation and belief of his doctrine.]

DISSER-

DISSERTATION III.

On PROVIDENCE.

THERE are ſome ſubjects of human enquiry, not only above our preſent comprehenſion, but which we are often bewildered in examining, and yet their importance is ſo great, in reſpect both of the regulation and comfort of human life, that it is neceſſary for us to endeavour the coming at ſome determinate notions with reſpect to them. Such is the doctrine of *Providence*, a doctrine of natural as well as of revealed religion, and of great conſequence both as to faith and practice; but no complaint is more common than that of its being very dark and myſterious; if the ground of this complaint be, that we are unable thoroughly to comprehend it, nothing is leſs to be wondered at. The providence of God has reſpect to his government of the world; now, we do not or ſhould not wonder, even in human governments, if we ſhould often be unable to ſee through the whole of their views and meaſures to whom the taſk of government is committed, and whoſe charge and ſtudy it is more particularly: Their meaſures would be but ill concerted, and eaſily baffled,

fled, if every ſhallow politician could ſee through them. Much more then may it be ſaid, that we are all ſuch ſhallow politicians as to the ways of God *; the ways and meaſures of the ſupreme Governor are far above out of our ſight; it may however be remarked, that, in order to ſee more of them, it is not what the world calls great acuteneſs or capacity that we have moſt need to ſeek after, but a certain ſingleneſs of heart, humility, and the fear of God, a careful attention to his providences, reflecting on what are paſt, and comparing them with the preſent, if we would form any judgment of what is future; and, as to all this *ſcience* of providence, "God's ſe-"cret is with them who fear him."

But, after all, though only a ſmall part of God's ways is thus known, yet this is not ſo much the matter of wonder and complaint with others, as that, even in what is known (in reſpect of its preſent effects) they ſhould often find ſuch a difficulty of reconciling it to his wiſdom, his righteouſneſs and his mercy.

But if the truth of any propoſition can once be proved, all the difficulties that appear muſt not hinder our belief of it, even ſuppoſing them ſuch as we are unable fully

* It would rather be an argument againſt the infinite wiſdom of Providence, if creatures, ſo limited as we are in knowledge, could ſee through much of its plans or deſigns.

to remove; no objection can avail but such as proves it either contrary to reason or revelation, and to suppose such contrary proofs on both sides of a question would be absurd, it would be supposing a proposition to be true and false at the same time.

To apply this, therefore, to the doctrine of Providence, we shall

I. Endeavour to explain and establish what it is that we are warranted, both by reason and revelation, to believe with respect to it, and the improvement fit to be made of it, and

II. The objections to it shall be considered, and whether we can give a satisfying solution of them or not, they must be supposed such as will admit of it, was our knowledge of the subject more complete.

1. Then, let us consider, what it is that we are warranted, both by reason and revelation, to believe with respect to providence, meaning thereby "God's superintendency "over his creatures for their direction "and preservation," so as to make them subservient to those ends for which they were brought at first into being, and which we cannot conceive to be any other than a display of the glory of their Creator, not in the limited, and often corrupt sense in which glory is commonly spoken of among men, and opposed to the general good, but as intimating a display of his glorious perfections, in the way of communicating such degrees

degrees of perfection and happineſs to his creatures as their natures are capable of; and, in order to this, recovering them to, and retaining them in a conformity to the original law of their creation.

The lower ranks of creatures, both animate and inanimate, cannot vary from the laws of their creation, but ſeem, by the neceſſity of their natures, to move on uniformly, towards thoſe ends for which they were created. The heavenly bodies have certain ſtated revolutions aſſigned them, which they regularly perform according to God's original appointment; the groſs material bodies around us have alſo certain laws which they invariably obey, as the brutes do thoſe appetites and propenſities given them for their own preſervation, and for making them ſubſervient to the purpoſes of man; but man himſelf, for whoſe uſe, we have reaſon to believe, all theſe inferior orders of creatures were deſigned, has not only certain laws and propenſities in common with them, as being, in reſpect of his body, material and ſenſible, but is alſo endowed with higher powers, enabling him to know and enjoy God, the ſupreme Author of his being, and had a freedom of will given him, by which he was left to chooſe which of the two he would follow, either his body with its ſenſes and appetites,

ſo as to debaſe his nature and ſet him on a level with the brutes, or thoſe nobler powers which fit him for an intercourſe with his Maker, in the ſpiritual exerciſes of ſerving, loving, and adoring Him, who is the fountain of all being and perfection.

Either of theſe two ways man is at liberty to chooſe, either the obedience and gratification of ſenſe, or the obedience and enjoyment of God; the powers of reaſon and underſtanding were given him to direct his choice, and, upon the firſt declaration that was made of God's not being the object of it, that unhappy departure from him commenced, by which the principles of our nature were firſt corrupted; ſo that, *now*, the adminiſtration of providence is ſuited to us, not only as we are *men*, but likeways as we are *ſinners*, and made ſubſervient to his gracious deſigns for our recovery to perfection and happineſs; for our recovery (as it was before expreſſed) into a conformity to the original law and end of our creation. The

1*ſt* Thing therefore we ſhall mention, as well warranted and neceſſary to be attended to here, is "Our having a firm belief of "Providence itſelf, particularly as extend-"ing to all human actions and concerns, "and as oppoſed to fate on the one hand, "and blind chance on the other."

We

We ſcarcely read of a nation among the antients that was not divided into three different ſects, according to the different opinions they held with reſpect to this.

Some profeſſing to believe a ſupreme over-ruling Providence, extending, as was ſaid, to all human actions and concerns; others maintaining that they were determined by a fatal neceſſity; and others that all happened by chance, without any fixed deſign or direction.

The antient heathen philoſophers were divided into three ſects, according as they eſpouſed one or other of thoſe opinions; theſe were the Epicureans, who aſcribed all to chance; the Stoicks, who believed in fate; and the Academics, who would ſeem to have admitted of Providence. The Jews were in the ſame manner divided into three ſects, the Phariſees, Sadducees, and Eſſenes, and the ſame diverſity of opinions has, in ſome degree, deſcended to the various religious denominations of our own times.

The arguments from *reaſon* in proof of a Providence are many and unanſwerable.

1*ſt*, It may be argued *a priore*, from God's omnipreſence, and his perfections, which muſt be exerciſed, and their exerciſe is his providence.

Is not this way of reaſoning *a priore*, you'll ſay, too abſtract and refined to work

general conviction? I anſwer, It may be ſo in ſome caſes, but not in all: On the contrary, in all our reaſonings from cauſe to effect, ſo far as they are founded in any kind of theory, they may be ſaid to be *a priore*. There muſt indeed be another method uſed before we arrive at this theory: There muſt be induction, or a collection of experiments; we muſt argue *a poſteriore*, from experience or obſervation of effects, before the nature of ſubordinate cauſes can be in any meaſure inveſtigated, ſo as to argue from them; but, when this is once done, the reaſoning *a priore* may proceed ſucceſsfully.

With reſpect to the *Supreme* or *firſt cauſe*, indeed, though it might be thought that there could be no reaſoning *a priore*, yet it has been attempted, and with ſome ſucceſs. The ſum of this celebrated argument, ſo far as it reſpects the exiſtence of the *firſt cauſe*, is briefly this,

We cannot conceive of an endleſs ſeries of cauſes, or of any thing's being its own cauſe, without involving us in the abſurdity and contradiction of ſuppoſing effects without cauſes, *i. e.* of their being effects and their not being effects, of their exiſting and not exiſting at the ſame time; ſo that, in tracing the origin or ſource of exiſtence, the idea of *ſelf-exiſtence* always breaks in upon

upon us, as alſo ideas of *ſpace* and *duration* which we cannot limit. *Self-exiſtence*, *eternity*, and *immenſity* are thus, according to our ideas, neceſſary, *i. e.* their not taking place, would imply a contradiction; but as all theſe are only modes of exiſtence, or *attributes*, we muſt conclude that there exiſts *neceſſarily* a *Being*, to whom theſe attributes of ſelf-exiſtence, eternity and immenſity or infinity, belong.

This is all the length that the argument can be ſuppoſed to proceed *a priore*; and, even here, it may be ſaid, that, as accounting for theſe ideas in us, is the foundation of the argument, we ſeem to argue rather *a poſteriore*, from the effects to the cauſe; but, be this as it will, when we proceed farther, to a proof of Supreme *Intelligence* or *Wiſdom*, it is, on all hands, acknowledged, that we can prove it only *a poſteriore*, from our ideas or experience of *intelligence* in ourſelves: The Supreme *power* of the firſt cauſe is alſo beſt proved from its effects: and, in like manner, all his moral perfections, his juſtice, goodneſs, *&c.* are proved from any degrees or reſemblances of them that are found in his creatures, and his diſplay of theſe to them in the way of his *Providence*.

Wherein then, you will ſay, lies the proof *a priore* with reſpect to *Providence?* In this plain connection.—

From

From any degrees, reſemblances, or effects, as juſt now mentioned, of God's moral perfections, his juſtice and goodneſs, as well as of his natural perfections of power and wiſdom, which we find in ourſelves and around us, we conclude, that they muſt be in the higheſt degree in him. So far we argue *a poſteriore* from the effects to the cauſe; but, the nature of this cauſe being thus far inveſtigated, we may in all other caſes very ſafely and conſiſtently argue *a priore* from his nature and perfections, his omnipreſence and omniſcience, and conclude, particularly in this caſe, as to his governing all things by his providence, that we muſt believe it as firmly and unavoidably, as we do his natural and moral perfections; for that we cannot conceive of them as taking place, without ſuppoſing them to be exerciſed; and the ends for which they are ſo, can only be what were mentioned, namely, the communicating ſuch degrees of happineſs and perfection to his creatures, as are ſuited to their different natures and capacities; nor is this arguing in a circle any more than in the other inſtances mentioned, where we reaſon from the nature of cauſes and their influence, in caſes that are known, to ſuch as are unknown or unexperienced: Were we to prove, that God is intelligent becauſe man is ſo, and again,

gain, man's intelligence from God's, this indeed would be a circle: But we prove man's intelligence from his experience or feelings, from that we argue as to the Supreme intelligence, and, on eſtabliſhing this, we ſuppoſe its exerciſe extended to all its other effects, whether known to us or unknown.

2*d*, The other arguments from *reaſon* to prove a providence, are plainly *a poſteriore*, taken from what we ſee of its operations or effects; particularly every appearance of order and regularity in the natural world, ſuch as in the returns of the ſeaſons and their effects on the vegetable world, the ſucceſſion of day and night, the proportions betwixt births and deaths, males and females, the operations of inſtinct in irrational animals, and their being ſuited to their different elements and offices; all which particulars would bear great enlargement, and are a very proper ſubject of contemplation * for giving an habitual impreſſion of God's preſence and government in the way of his providence, and leading us reverently to adore it.

3*d*, MIRACLES have been ſometimes mentioned, as an argument for providence; were they to happen often, it might rather be

* In arguing as to an over-ruling providence, the appearance of order in any one inſtance proves intelligence, but its not appearing in a thouſand inſtances, does not prove the contrary, becauſe it may and muſt be aſcribed to our ignorance.

be ſaid, that they would weaken the belief of it, but by their happening ſometimes, tho' ſeldom, this belief is eſtabliſhed, and ſtill more ſo by PROPHECIES, or predictions of future events, long before the viſible cauſes are known to exiſt, or at leaſt to operate. This, even in a few inſtances, evidently proves their being under the direction of a Supreme Ruler or Governour, to whom all events are known from the beginning. But

4*th*, When we conſult SCRIPTURE, there is no room left for the ſmalleſt doubt with reſpect to *providence*: The whole tenor of ſcripture tends to eſtabliſh our belief of it, not in a cold and general way, but ſo as to render our belief of it ſteady, lively, habitual and practical, and confirmed by frequent reflection, reliance, acquieſcence, and ſubmiſſion to it; acknowledging, "That "the kingdom is the Lord's, and that he is "the governour among the nations; that "there is no wiſdom nor underſtanding "nor counſel but from him:" Declarations to this purpoſe, we have in the Old as well as New Teſtament; but it is remarkable, that there are more complaints of the juſtice of providence in the Old Teſtament than in the New, and that the comfort chiefly given in conſequence of them, is a view of the end of the wicked, or judgment awaiting them, either in this life or the next:

But in the New Teſtament, we are taught to take comfort, in the view of dark or adverſe diſpenſations of providence, from the hopes of their working for our good, particularly in a ſpiritual ſenſe. *i. e.* in what reſpects the improvement of our ſouls; ſo that ſufferings are no more to be called evil than the fire by which metals are refined: We are likewiſe taught in the New Teſtament to take comfort from the vaſt diſproportion between thoſe temporal ſufferings, and the eternal bleſſedneſs to which they are conducive. Theſe conſiderations lead us to obſerve, that

SECONDLY, As we have ſufficient authority both from ſcripture and reaſon to believe a providence, *i. e* a ſupreme intelligence preſiding over the intereſts and concerns of mankind; we are alſo warranted to believe in the *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* of God's providential adminiſtration, that he has always the beſt ends in view, even the happineſs and improvement of his creatures, and that he uſes the moſt effectual means for promoting theſe, however much we may be often in the dark with reſpect to them, as not ſeeing their tendency and manner of operation for theſe ends, or thinking their attainment long delayed*.

Without

* If wiſdom and goodneſs, juſtice and power, be diſplayed in ſome of the operations and government of providence, it proves the reality of it; nor is it a ſufficient objection againſt this, that more of theſe is not diſplayed, unleſs we were to ſuppoſe God obliged at all times to act up to the utmoſt extent of theſe perfections, in a way manifeſt to us.

Without this perſuaſion, of the wiſdom and goodneſs of providence, little comfort would ariſe from the contemplation or belief of it; but of this alſo we may eaſily be ſatisfied, from innumerable teſtimonies with reſpect to it in ſcripture, aſſerting, "That "by wiſdom God has founded the earth, "and that it is full of his goodneſs:" As alſo, from as much as we can trace or diſcern of the divine adminiſtration, even with reſpect to the things of this life, in which it appears, that "He is good to all, and "his tender mercies are over all his works;" and, if this appears from any part of the ways of his providence of which we have a clearer view, we may, by analogy, conclude the ſame as to other parts of his adminiſtration that are concealed from us. Nor can we indeed eaſily conceive any other ends which a Being of infinite perfection and happineſs could have, in making and ruling his creatures, but to diſplay and communicate perfection and happineſs to them, according to their different natures, conditions, and ſubſerviency to one another.

Thus much as to our belief of intelligence, wiſdom, and goodneſs, in the adminiſtration of providence; but what ſhall be ſaid of *juſtice*? Of this alſo we ſee evidences enough to eſtabliſh our belief of it, and in many caſes, where this is not ſo obvious at

firſt

firſt view, we may (as ſhall be obſerved when we come to anſwer objections,) afterwards, upon a narrower examination and knowledge of the ways of providence, be made to ſee and acknowledge a diſplay of juſtice where we had formerly complained of the want of it; but it muſt alſo be added, that as God's wiſdom and goodneſs in the operations of providence cannot be accounted for in this ſtate, without connecting it with another to ſucceed, in which theſe perfections ſhall have their full effect and iſſue: This is ſtill more obſervable with reſpect to his *juſtice*; and, though there are proofs enough of it, to put it beyond doubt, yet, there are alſo ſuch appearances of inequality in his diſtributions at preſent, as lay a foundation for one of the ſtrongeſt arguments we have in proof of a future ſtate of being, in which there ſhall be ſuch a diſplay and exerciſe of *juſtice*, as will make God's different regards for the righteous and wicked manifeſt to the rational world. The ſame may be ſaid of God's infinite *purity* and *holineſs*, *i. e.* his hatred of all ſin or moral evil and unrighteouſneſs, a divine attribute ſo little mentioned by the wiſeſt heathens, that they all allow many impurities to be aſcribed even to thoſe whom they conſidered as their Deities: But as there is none of the divine perfections more fully

aſſerted and diſplayed, or whoſe reſemblance is more recommended in the chriſtian revelation, than this of holineſs, and yet much oppoſition to it given and tolerated in the preſent ſtate, the ſame argument may be drawn from this, as from the conſideration of God's juſtice, formerly mentioned, in proof of another ſtate to ſucceed, in which his holineſs as well as juſtice ſhall appear to have its full effect.

There remains only the conſideration of God's *power*, how far this is exerciſed and evidenced in the government of his providence, *i. e* how far his other adorable perfections, now mentioned, are ſupported by infinite power; and of this there is leſs room for any doubt than in the other caſes formerly mentioned. Even that part of the natural world that falls under our notice, affords awful demonſtrations of his power, enough to prove it ſuperior to all that can oppoſe it, and thereby to make it a proper object of our ſupreme truſt and confidence. Such a ſuperiority appears to all other power, or ſuch an extent of power as is ſufficient to account for all the phenomena and effects that fall under our notice, for this is all that we can reaſon from: So that there will, no doubt, ſtill remain a queſtion, Whether this power be delegated or derived to any inferior agent, preſiding over the preſent

ſent ſyſtem of things; or if there is an immediate interpoſition and exerciſe of ſupreme power for this purpoſe? This queſtion ſhall be taken notice of afterwards; it is enough at preſent to obſerve, in general, that the latter is every way the moſt rational and ſcriptural ſuppoſition. By ſupreme or infinite power all things can be done with equal eaſe, mediately or immediately; there is no diſtinction, as in the caſe of ſubordinate or limited power, from any thing's being more or leſs difficult or diſtant. So that we may, at all times, conſider ourſelves and our intereſts as under the immediate notice and direction of the Supreme Ruler of the world, by whom the heavenly bodies continue or move in their orbs, and without whom one hair of our heads cannot fall to the ground: To whom we have alſo reaſon to believe, that, of all his viſible creatures MAN is the peculiar object of his care, as, of them all; he only is made capable of any acquaintance and intercourſe with or reliance on himſelf; and it is this conſideration, of men's ſuperior capacity, in the way of acquaintance with and reliance on God, and his particular attention to their intereſts; it is this conſideration (I ſay) that renders man's preſent condition (however ſeemingly indigent, infirm, and helpleſs,) preferable to that of any other creatures he ſees around him.

In a narrow and partial view of human life, it may indeed be ſaid, that there is no creature, we are acquainted with, more weak and helpleſs in himſelf than MAN; tho' his natural deſires and neceſſities be ſo great, yet that his natural abilities do not appear to correſpond with them; ſo that there is no creature we know leſs able to do for himſelf without the aſſiſtance of others: This is often a very great ſubject of complaint, but it is ſo only in a confined view of man's condition, or, when only his animal ſtate is conſidered; for if we extend our view to his ſpiritual or intellectual ſtate, we ſhall find leſs cauſe of complaint on this head; beſides, that his original or infant weakneſs makes a limited intelligent being, like man, a more proper ſubject of trial and improvement; (for if man was not firſt an infant he could not be ſo eaſily trained,) beſides this conſideration, I ſay, we may obſerve that the powers of underſtanding and reflection which are given us, and which direct us to look for help and ſafety, to an over ruling Being, infinitely wiſe, powerful, and merciful; theſe are able to compenſate every outward diſadvantage; and, if to theſe we add the ſupernatural diſcoveries he has made of himſelf to us, particularly in the chriſtian revelation, and the evidence there given of his tender concern for our preſent and fu-

ture

ture intereſts; if all this be taken into the account, we may ſay, that there is no creature, we are converſant with, that has ſhared more liberally in God's favour and good will than man, nor any who has a ſurer, a nobler, and happier reſource, amidſt every diſadvantage or diſtreſs to which his preſent condition makes him liable. The very angels in heaven, happy and glorious as they are, in beholding and miniſtring to the moſt High, have their entire dependence on God, and can have no higher help than this, which is the ultimate reſource of man; with this difference, indeed, as to him, that the imperfection and corruption of his preſent condition places this help and reſource ſeemingly at a greater diſtance; inſomuch as his views of God muſt thereby be darker, and his intercourſe with him more difficult; from which many fears and diſcouragements muſt ariſe, giving him occaſion for the exerciſe of truſt in God, as well as engaging him to look forward to a ſtate of higher perfection and felicity, and to have his faith and hope exerciſed with a view to it: For

THIRDLY, As we have ſufficient authority for believing God's particular attention to the circumſtances and concerns of men in the way of his providence, and that his natural and moral perfections, in the

manner now mentioned, are regularly and uniformly exerciſed in carrying on ſuch ends as are moſt conſiſtent with, or conducive to the higheſt intereſts of mankind in *general*; ſo likewiſe, we are warranted to believe that we ourſelves, each of us in *particular*, are not excluded, by any thing in our external circumſtances or condition, be they ever ſo mean, and ſeemingly inconſiderable, from the hopes of ſharing in the beneficial effects of his providence, as operating for our good in the iſſue, whatever may be its aſpect or appearance with reſpect to us at preſent.

Without ſome perſuaſion of this, of God's attention to each of us in *particular*, very little advantage would ariſe, either in the way of reſtraint or of comfort, from the belief of a general providence, extending only to ſome events and operations of more general conſequence, or a partial providence extending only to particular characters and denominations of men.

Every argument we mentioned for proving a providence, may be ſaid to ſtand againſt theſe erroneous opinions with reſpect to it, as every argument againſt the continual interpoſition of the Deity in all inſtances, may ſtand againſt his interpoſition in any one inſtance, ſince the original eſtabliſhment of things. We ſhall afterwards

ſee

ſee, that any apprehenſion of ſome things being too minute and trivial, or inconſiderable, for the care of providence, ariſes from a wrong judgment of what is moſt perfective of it, or diſhonouring to it; it is enough to obſerve here, that, from all the arguments formerly mentioned, it appears, that none are excluded from the common care of providence; and that, as it regulates and conducts all for the general good, we may be aſſured, each of us individually, that our higheſt good ſhall, in the iſſue, be thereby promoted and ſecured; if there be no obſtruction to it on our own part by unbelief, diſtruſt, diſobedience, and reſiſtance to the will of the Moſt High: It would be moſt diſhonouring to him, and a direct contradiction to what was ſaid of his perfections, to ſuppoſe, that the good of the whole, as purſued by him, ſhould not always be entirely conſiſtent with, or rather neceſſarily imply the good and happineſs of all who (tho' conſcious of their own unworthineſs and inability) have the ſame great end at heart, and who endeavour, both in the way of ſervice and ſuffering, to have their wills ever conformed to his. A firm perſuaſion, therefore, that all the operations of God's providence are thus favourable to our higheſt intereſts, will reconcile us to them, even when apparently againſt us; it will make us take

take every thing in good part from him, as a child would do from a parent, whoſe tenderneſs and affection, as well as ſuperior wiſdom, ability, and attention to his intereſts, he was fully convinced of.

But, as it is acknowledged, that the operations of providence may, at preſent, ſeem adverſe and ſevere, even when finally conducive to our higheſt intereſts; in order to ſupport us amidſt this darkneſs and intricacy, it may be added, that.

Fourthly, We are alſo warranted to believe, that however much we may at preſent be often in the dark, with reſpect to the ways of providence, even when operating finally for our good, yet, in ſome future period of our exiſtence, they ſhall be *unfolded* to us, and we ſhall be made to ſee the wiſdom and goodneſs of the divine adminiſtration as to ourſelves, and others with whom we are connected; and that even in thoſe caſes which were to us formerly dark and perplexed.

The difficulty of accounting for many of the ways of providence in the preſent ſtate, is one argument to prove the certainty of a future ſtate, a ſtate in which the human capacity ſhall be enlarged, ſo as to comprehend much more of God's nature and ways. Nor is there any doubt but that one part of the happineſs of good men in this future

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ſtate will ariſe (as ſhall be ſet forth in our concluding diſſertation with reſpect to it) from their receiving, in this manner, clearer views of God's goodneſs, even in thoſe providential diſpenſations with reſpect to them, which ſeemed formerly myſterious or adverſe. Will not the aſſurance of this, therefore, be enough to reconcile you to them at preſent? If your phyſician ſhould give you any medicine, that was diſagreeable to you at firſt, and tell you that, tho' he was not to explain to you the manner of its operation, yet, in a ſhort time, you would know it, and feel the good effects of it: Would you not very readily take it on his word? If a parent or teacher ever preſcribed to you a taſk, which you thought unneceſſary at the time, and told you that you would ſee more the neceſſity of it ſome time hence; did you not alſo take their word for it? Does not therefore, your heavenly Phyſician, your heavenly Parent and Teacher, deſerve ſtill more credit from you, and acquieſcence in his will, even when you know not at preſent the particular ends he has in view?

Ignorant however, as we are of the ends of many of God's providential diſpenſations, or their manner of operating, in an outward way for our benefit; yet if we conſider them as they have relation to our SOULS, and are made ſubſervient to their intereſts

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and improvement, we ſhall ſee another channel, of much greater conſequence, in which they operate for our benefit, and manifeſt the Divine wiſdom and goodneſs in numberleſs caſes that are dark and intricate to us at preſent, but in which a perſuaſion that they ſhall operate in the iſſue for the benefit and improvement of our Souls, would be one of the beſt ſources of comfort under them, and one of the beſt means of reconciling us to them.

For leading us, therefore, to this perſuaſion, we need only conſider the evidences we have of God's tender and compaſſionate regard for our ſouls: There is nothing indeed of which we have clearer evidence than this; the ſpirituality of their nature and their original reſemblance of himſelf, give us reaſon to believe it, as every creature of God's muſt be more or leſs the object of his love, according to the degree of this reſemblance: Nor would it be an honouring of God in our thoughts to imagine, that what proceeds from himſelf, and partakes in ſome meaſure of his nature, ſhould be originally the object of his hatred: No creature of his can be ſo, unleſs ſo far as it has voluntarily departed from the law of its creation, or fallen from its original condition.

Such a voluntary departure from God's law, is what we call *Sin*, which is the only evil

evil that can render any creature of God's hateful to him: But as this evil is introduced, as the ſoul is corrupted by ſin, and has departed from God, what further hopes can there be of an intereſt in his love and goodneſs? Had he not revealed it to us himſelf, we ſhould here indeed have been at a loſs to know how his love could be further manifeſted; but, from the revelation he has made us of his will, by his SON appearing and ſuffering in our nature, he has clearly ſhown to us the way in which there is room left for a diſplay, not only of his goodneſs to us as *men*, but likewiſe of his mercy to us as *Sinners*.

The *goodneſs* of God may be ſaid to have reſpect even to the moſt perfect and innocent of his rational creatures, but his *mercy* only to ſuch of them as are fallen and ſinful, who deſerve nothing from him, and are unable to recover themſelves or give any ſatisfaction for their offences againſt him; theſe, unleſs the ſeeds of goodneſs in them be entirely extinguiſhed, are the peculiar objects of his mercy, which is exerciſed in the way of pardoning, redeeming, reclaiming and renewing them, in the manner, and upon the grounds ſet forth to us in the revelation now mentioned; and the conſideration of this, of the proviſion God has made for the recovery and ſalvation of our ſouls, for

for reſtoring and ſecuring their eternal happineſs, together with the comfortable hopes of attaining it, may reconcile us to the various trials and diſtreſſes of the preſent life, from whatever quarter they come, whether from the hand of man, or from the more immediate hand of God.

Shall the ambitious man take comfort in all his toils, from the view of favour or power among men? Shall the man, whoſe heart is ſet on wealth and riches, take comfort from the acquiſition or poſſeſſion of theſe, even under all the contempt he can meet with? And will not you comfort yourſelf, amidſt other diſtreſſes or diſappointments, in what reſpects your outward condition, by conſidering that your eternal hopes are ſecured, that your moſt valuable treaſure is ſafely laid up? You may be poor in this world, and yet rich towards God. You may loſe your friends and many comforts you once enjoyed or expected, but, be comforted, if you have reaſonable grounds to expect ſomething higher and more durable. Your body may be feeble and languiſhing, yet let it not diſcourage you, when, even through this, you ſee the more of God's love and affection for your ſoul; when its recovery and health are provided for.

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For what we would have particularly to be obſerved or attended to here is, that the ſevereſt diſpenſations of God's providence to us, in the preſent life, are often the means by which he carries on the purpoſes of his grace or favour with reſpect to our ſouls, in order to that life which is eternal. It would be of unſpeakable conſequence to us, in point of comfort and happineſs, to have the firm belief of God's providential goodneſs in this way of making our croſſes our bleſſings, and the diſeaſes of the body, medicine for the ſoul: There is nothing more certain, than that this is the caſe, however difficult it often is for us to believe it, even as it is often difficult to make a child believe, when he is corrected by his parent, that it is done in love and for his good.

For leading us to the firm belief of this, we muſt look forward to what awaits the ſoul *hereafter*, and reſt ſatisfied that, by this, God's love will be fully made manifaſt, that, by what awaits the ſoul hereafter, he will abundantly make up for the greateſt outward diſadvantages at preſent: No conſideration can be more neceſſary and comfortable than this; for, if we were to judge of his love and regard to us, merely from the outward evidence of it here, they might often be queſtioned; but he has not confined our views to ſo narrow a compaſs; and, if thoſe whom he favours do, at any time ſeem to be

forgot, or *frowned* on by him here, it is only that he may acknowledge them the more eminently hereafter, when they ſhall ſee the full effects and progreſs of his providential goodneſs, with reſpect to them.

Thus we ſee the ſum or amount of what we are warranted, both by reaſon and revelation, to believe with reſpect to *Providence:* But before we proceed to conſider the objections againſt it, there are two or three ſhort obſervations fit to be made, with a view to ſome more practical benefit from what we have been conſidering.

1. If nothing can befal you but by the appointment of Providence, then lay aſide all unneceſſary anxiety about futurity; your fears are vain, your immoderate cares are unavailing. You have ſomething important, you'll ſay, at ſtake, which will at ſuch a particular time be determined, and can you avoid being anxious about it? But what will this better you, when you have once uſed every mean in your power, if it is a matter independent of you; can you direct or arreſt the hand of Providence in its deciſions? Or, perhaps, you have ſome imaginary danger before you, and you'll think you have reaſon to be alarmed with it: But will your fears or alarms alter the courſe of Providence? inſtead of their leſſening your danger, is it not rather likely that they will magnify it, and diſable you

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the more to evade it; inſtead of averting the uncertain evil you fear, may it not poſſibly rather miſrepreſent it, and make a real evil of that which otherwiſe you would perhaps never have felt; anticipating the ſufferings of to-morrow, as if thoſe of to-day were not enough for you.

It is not therefore your outward cares, your fears, your dangers that ſhould draw your chief attention, if you have the firm belief of the doctrine we have been conſidering, but the ends fit to be purſued, means to be uſed, and duties to be performed on your part; leaving events entirely in the hand of Providence.

2. If nothing can befal you but by the appointment of Providence, then learn to look above the hand of man in whatever befals you, and in whatever awaits you, whether proſperous or adverſe.

Some Jewiſh writers have a conceit with reſpect to the Patriarch Joſeph, that his enlargement from priſon in Egypt was deferred by Providence, for two years longer than otherways it would have been, becauſe he had too great a reliance on Pharaoh's butler, without looking further: Be this as it will, your ſafety and deliverance will be beſt ſecured, by looking above all ſecond cauſes, as the objects of your reliance, or of your diſpleaſure, but conſider them as inſtruments in the hand of God, for ac-

compliſhing the purpoſes of his Providence with reſpect to you, and that to this alwiſe over-ruling hand, it is your happineſs, as well as duty, in all circumſtances, moſt chearfully to ſubmit*.

Laſtly, If the ſchemes of Providence are not cloſed or compleated in the preſent ſtate, then be not haſty to determine as to their wiſdom and goodneſs, in whatever has reſpect to yourſelf or others, from any thing you can here diſcover: You would think the man very raſh or ignorant, whom you obſerved to be prejudiced againſt a picture, or ſtatue, before he ſaw any more than the firſt outlines, or rude draught of it, or againſt a building, when he ſaw only the materials looſely collected, before they were properly diſpoſed, or put together: Be not you therefore over-haſty in judging as to the operations of Providence, until the whole ſcheme is finiſhed, compleated, and unfolded; it is then, that its harmony and beauty ſhall become conſpicuous to the whole of God's intelligent creation.

After having conſidered what it is that we are, upon the ſureſt grounds, both of Scripture and reaſon, warranted to believe with

* Subjection to the will of God (which none can throw off) is very different from that ſubmiſſion here ſpoken of; we are to ſubmit, not from neceſſity but choice, not becauſe we muſt, but becauſe we ought to do it: The exerciſe of ſuch ſubmiſſion cannot be kept up in long continued diſtreſs without ſome degree of chearfulneſs founded on faith, and cheriſhed by hope towards God.

with reſpect to Providence, it now remains,

II. That we take ſome notice of the difficulties that appear here, the queſtions or *objections* by which ſome have unhappily laboured to weaken the belief of a doctrine that affords ſuch unſpeakable ſatisfaction to every wiſe and good mind. The

1*ſt* Difficulty we ſhall mention, that occurs with reſpect to the doctrine of Providence, is to reconcile this to *free agency* in man; as if it ſhould be ſaid, "If God "works all by his Providence, extending "even to human actions, what is left for "man to work? If God over-rules all, "what liberty of acting has any being un-"der his government?" I anſwer, juſt as much as is fit for him to have, and more than many make a right uſe of; juſt as much as renders us accountable for the way in which our powers of action are employed, and juſtifies the dictates of Conſcience in approving or condemning us. The feelings of our own minds are ſo clear and undeniable as to this, that we can no more doubt of it than of our own exiſtence, or any of our ſenſible perceptions; and, to ſay that theſe feelings are deluſive, would lay a foundation for univerſal ſcepticiſm.

"But ſtill, you'll inſiſt, the difficulty "remains of reconciling my freedom in "acting to God's Providence over-ruling "me in it; if I am accountable for my

" actions, muſt they not be free? if they " be free, Are they not contingent? and if " they are contingent, How can they be " ſaid to be over-ruled by Providence? " Does not this carry in it the abſurdity " of ſuppoſing them free and neceſſary at " the ſame time?"

This is the objection in its full force, and yet, did the imperfection of our ideas at preſent admit of our ſeeing through it, we would probably find it as frivolous as what was ſometimes uſed in the old ſcholaſtic diſputes to prove the impoſſibility of motion; becauſe, ſaid they, no body could move but either where it was, or where it was not; both which were abſurd, or, as others would have it, becauſe there was an univerſal plenum: We are now come to ſee ſo far through theſe objections as to pronounce them ridiculous; and, when we come to know more of the nature and eſſential conſtitution of our mental faculties, we ſhall alſo underſtand how their operations can be foreſeen and over-ruled by the ſupreme Being, without their being neceſſitated, or their freedom encroached on; for, that theſe two do, in fact, take place, and are, therefore, reconcileable to one another, is as certain as the exiſtence of motion, or the plaineſt maxim in philoſophy.

That the foreſeeing and over-ruling human actions is the prerogative of the ſupreme

preme Being alone, and incompetent to any other, we ſhall afterwards ſee reaſon for believing: But, the objection from free agency to *his* having this *prerogative* will be found to ſtand equally againſt every other hypotheſis that can be named; for, ſuppoſe only his preſcience to extend to human actions, but no over-ruling influence or appointment, beſides the objection from ſuppoſing the preſcience of an event not determined, may it not alſo be objected, How can any action be foreſeen without being certain, and, if it muſt certainly be done, how is it free? Nay even, though the divine preſcience as well as influence was ſuppoſed out of the queſtion, does not the ſame difficulty remain of the action's being certain from eternity? If we ſuppoſe that this previous certainty of it prevents its being free, becauſe it prevents its being caſual or contingent. If, indeed, this certainty depends upon the influence or operation of any external phyſical cauſes, it deſtroys liberty; but, if it depends only upon the motions of the will in an intelligent being, which muſt always be ſuppoſed influenced by motives, and that theſe motives are internal and rational, not external and compulſatory, there is all the idea of liberty neceſſary to make the agent accountable, let the previous certainty, foreknowledge, or appointment of the action be as it will:

Thus

Thus, if the ſun ſhall riſe or ſhine to-morrow, its doing ſo is certain to day, and was certain from eternity, but, as the certainty of its riſing or ſhining depends on phyſical cauſes, on fixed invariable laws, from which it cannot depart, it cannot be ſaid to act freely, or indeed to act at all, but to be acted upon; the certainty of the event, with reſpect to it, implies neceſſity, but, with reſpect to a ſuperior agent, who has theſe laws at command, it is entirely conſiſtent with liberty; whatever internal motive he may have in acting, it implies no neceſſity, unleſs we call it by a name that ſeems improper, though not uncommon, *viz.* A moral neceſſity ariſing from the influence that internal, moral, or rational motives have upon the will of an intelligent Being; if this be called neceſſity, it is, I may ſay, a free neceſſity, *i. e.* conſiſtent with the moſt perfect freedom, nay there cannot be true freedom without it, *i. e.* not that freedom which is conſiſtent with intelligence; there can only be caſualty.

If the influence of rational motives deſtroys freedom, none but idiots or madmen can be called free; for, to determine intelligent beings, there muſt be a regard ſuppoſed to ſuch motives; elſe it deſtroys their intelligence, which would be conſtituting freedom at too great an expence; with ſuch beings,

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the eſſence of liberty ſeems very much to ly in the power of attending more or leſs to theſe motives for acting one way rather than another; in this attention they are perfectly free, and their determination in conſequence of this being a ſelf-determination is the true idea of liberty, which is not deſtroyed even by outward reſtraint, if a conſciouſneſs of this ſelf-determination or election takes place: Thus a man is free in ſtaying at home all day, if it is his own choice, though, by his gate's being locked, unknown to him, he ſhould not have it in his power to go out. A power of ſurmounting all oppoſition is not neceſſary to liberty, but an inward voluntary determination of the power we have, elſe none but the ſupreme Being could be free; a power of acting contrarywiſe is not neceſſary to liberty, elſe a man would not be at liberty to walk, becauſe he could not fly: Indifference as to motives is not neceſſary to liberty, but that the motives be internal or addreſſed to the *will*; nor does even the moſt invariable regard of the will to theſe inward moral motives deſtroy freedom, elſe beings of ſuperior perfection would not be free; the more perfect any being is, this regard to moral motives is the more invariable; it is from this that freedom has its higheſt perfection or fitneſs for promoting

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extends to them in the way of preſcience, permiſſion, and over-ruling them for the greateſt general good, without deſtroying the idea of freedom, accountableneſs; and thoſe feelings of conſcience in the agent which indicate ſuch accountableneſs, as he alſo ſecretly animates, ſupports, and communicates ſpiritual aid in duty, without ſuperſeding our endeavours, or doing violence to our mental faculties. It would indeed be almoſt a denying of his Providence entirely, to deny it the influence now mentioned; as the principal object or ſpring of its operations, in regulating the affairs of mankind, ſeems to ly in working on the hearts and minds of men; but, neither God's influencing them, in the manner formerly mentioned, nor his ſupporting them in the uſe of their faculties, makes him chargeable with their ſins, or abuſe of theſe faculties: He cannot be reckoned the author of ſin, though his Providence ſupplies us with what becomes the occaſion of ſin; he is not chargeable with man's abuſe of himſelf and others by immoderate drinking, though he furniſhes him wine, and has given it the virtue of either refreſhing or inebriating, according to the diſcretion and judgment with which it is uſed.

Thus, in all other inſtances, may the purity and holineſs of God be vindicated, amidſt

amidſt all the impurity and corruption that prevails under the government of his providence: As the ſun in the firmament, not only illuminates the more beautiful parts of nature, but ſhines alſo, with all its brightneſs, on the ſeats of filth and corruption, without being itſelf thereby contaminated or defiled, thus the influence and dominion of providence extend not only to the virtuous, but likewiſe to the ſinful and corrupt purſuits of men, while it continues infinitely pure, immaculate, and untainted; nay it extends to them often even in the way of reſtraining from much ſin, elſe this world would almoſt be a hell. But if it ſhall be aſked, Why does he not reſtrain from more? We may as well aſk, Why does he not give heaven upon earth? Why does he not appear to us, at all times, to act up to the utmoſt of his perfections? But,

2*dly*, There is another objection to providence, ſo nearly connected with that which we have now been conſidering, that it admits of the ſame ſolution. "If, (will ſome "ſay) God over-rules all events by his pro- "vidence, For what purpoſe ſhall I *labour*? "The appointments of providence muſt "take place, Why then ſhould I *pray*? I "can neither inform God of any thing he "knew not before, nor expect he ſhould

extends to them in the way of preſcience, permiſſion, and over-ruling them for the greateſt general good, without deſtroying the idea of freedom, accountableneſs; and thoſe feelings of conſcience in the agent which indicate ſuch accountableneſs, as he alſo ſecretly animates, ſupports, and communicates ſpiritual aid in duty, without ſuperſeding our endeavours, or doing violence to our mental faculties. It would indeed be almoſt a denying of his Providence entirely, to deny it the influence now mentioned; as the principal object or ſpring of its operations, in regulating the affairs of mankind, ſeems to ly in working on the hearts and minds of men; but, neither God's influencing them, in the manner formerly mentioned, nor his ſupporting them in the uſe of their faculties, makes him chargeable with their ſins, or abuſe of theſe faculties: He cannot be reckoned the author of ſin, though his Providence ſupplies us with what becomes the occaſion of ſin; he is not chargeable with man's abuſe of himſelf and others by immoderate drinking, though he furniſhes him wine, and has given it the virtue of either refreſhing or inebriating, according to the diſcretion and judgment with which it is uſed.

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2*dly*, There is another objection to providence, ſo nearly connected with that which we have now been conſidering, that it admits of the ſame ſolution. " If, (will ſome " ſay) God over-rules all events by his pro- " vidence, For what purpoſe ſhall I *labour*? " The appointments of providence muſt " take place, Why then ſhould I *pray*? I " can neither inform God of any thing he " knew not before, nor expect he ſhould

" break through the order of his provi-
" dence at my requeſt ?"

The anſwer to all this is, that the ſuppoſition of a providence, is rather what encourages labour and prayer; he who overrules all things by his providence, has connected our uſe of proper means with the communication of his bleſſings to us; they are inſeparable from one another; he could have framed us ſo, and ordered our condition here in ſuch a manner, as not to need ſuch conſtant ſupplies and repairs, not to need any labour on our part, for obtaining them, nor any application to him for influencing our labours, and making them ſucceſsful: But, with a view to our improvement, and nearer admiſſion to himſelf, he ſaw two things neceſſary for us, *namely*, labour or exerciſe, and dependence on him for its continuance and ſucceſs. The trial to be taken of us here, made it neceſſary, that the powers given us ſhould be exerciſed, that they ſhould not ly idle and torpid; the improvement required for immortality, makes labour neceſſary with all theſe habits of patience, fortitude, ſubmiſſion, truſt, hope, *&c.* that are acquired by it, *i. e.* by the unſeen influence of providence upon it, connecting this labour or exerciſe on our part, with the improvement or benefit ariſing from it, ſo as, with every new effort,

to

to receive new ſtrength and ſucceſs, in a way that is certain and effectual, yet does no violence to our natural faculties.

To ſay then, that God's over-ruling all by his providence, implies his ſupplying, ſupporting, and relieving us, without regard to our uſe of means, would be repreſenting his providence in a light not at all ſuited to the nature of our preſent ſtate, which is ſo ordered, as that we may take it for granted, that, without the uſe of means, the interpoſition of providence is not to be expected; it may indeed, in a way of ſovereign goodneſs, be vouchſafed without this, but we cannot warrantably look for it without the uſe of means, if in our power; and further, even when they are in our power, and when uſed, he has ſeen it neceſſary, for retaining us in our duty and dependence, that we ſhould be engaged to apply to him, and to truſt * in him for giving efficacy to theſe means, or making our labours proſperous; and, though we cannot inform God of any thing he knew not before, nor move him to counteract the appointments of his providence, yet, beſides his precepts to this purpoſe, injoining us to pray to him, and thereby teſtify the ſenſe we have of our neceſſities

* A proper truſt in providence, does not hinder from the uſe of means, but from the uſe of unwarrantable means, on which it would be preſumptuous in us to expect a bleſſing.

ceſſities, by making known our requeſts; beſides this, I ſay, he has, by his method of diſpenſing his benefits, given undeniable evidence, that the operations of his providence are accommodated to the requeſts, and made ſubſervient to the intereſts of thoſe who humbly implore his aid, and thereby teſtify their entire confidence in him; by the frequent acting and expreſſing of which, in the way of prayer and every act of duty and devotion, that habit of ſteady reliance, dependence, and truſt in God, which is ſo highly ſuitable to us, and agreeable to him, comes to be firmly eſtabliſhed. A

3*d Objection* brought againſt providence, or rather a limitation of it, is, that it cannot be ſuppoſed to deſcend to objects or actions, that are very *minute* and *trivial*; that this would be below the dignity of the ſupreme Governour. " We acknowledge (I " have heard ſome ſay) his providential go- " vernment, ſo far as to believe, that he has " eſtabliſhed certain general laws, and that " they are ſuited to the different orders of " his creatures, but, theſe being once eſta- " bliſhed, is it not more conſiſtent with the " honour of his government to ſuppoſe, " that he allows theſe laws to have their " courſe, or natural effect, without any " further interpoſition or attention to e- " very minute particular that occurs, in the

" way

" way of obedience to, or deviation from
" them? or, if there be ſuch a particular
" interpoſition and attention, is it not more
" conſiſtent with the ideas of his honour
" and dignity now mentioned, to ſuppoſe,
" that he has devolved this particular care
" and attention on certain ſubordinate in-
" viſible agents, commiſſioned or empower-
" ed by him to preſide over thoſe different
" orders of beings mentioned, according to
" the different provinces aſſigned them,
" and acting in conformity to the general
" laws he has eſtabliſhed?"

The following obſervations will, I hope, ſuffice in anſwer to all this.

Firſt, It might be enough to ſay, that God's immediate interpoſition by his providence, even in ſuch caſes as we reckon minute and inconſiderable, being ſo fully and poſitively aſſerted in Scripture, as what in fact takes place, and the ſame being likewiſe proved by reaſon, under the preceeding head, all objections, ariſing from our ideas of what is more or leſs conſiſtent with his honour or dignity, as ſupreme governour, muſt be ſuppoſed vain and ill grounded; they cannot deſtroy the truth of a fact that appears certain and eſtabliſhed; ſo that we muſt take it for granted, that the inconſiſtency or miſtake lies in our ideas or notions of the divine honour and dignity, for theſe are what are here pleaded, as

ſtanding againſt a particular providence, and not any want of knowledge and power for governing, more than for creating. We may therefore obſerve,

Secondly, That the diſtinctions of more or leſs difficult, more or leſs important and honourable, cannot be ſuppoſed the ſame in the eye of the Supreme Being as in that of man; all effects are equally eaſy to infinite power, all events equally manifeſt to infinite wiſdom*. It is judging of him according to the meaſure of human ſtrength, ſkill, or conſtancy, to ſuppoſe that a multiplicity of objects, be they great or ſmall, can weary him, or any diſagreeable occurrences diſcompoſe him. We admit that it was no impeachment of his honour, no diminution of his dignity, to create the meaneſt inſects, we muſt therefore admit the ſame as to his preſerving and governing them: None denies his preſence with them all, and if this implies no ſtain, no meanneſs, neither does his providence over them.

There are two conſiderations, which, if properly attended to here, would ſilence all ſuch frivolous objections againſt a particular providence.

The

* He ſees, with equal eye, as God of all;
A hero periſh, or a ſparrow fall;
Atoms or ſyſtems into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burſt, and now a world.
Eſſay on Man.

The one is, that though it is certain, that God's care and attention extends to his creatures, according as the elevation or importance of their ſtate requires; yet this elevation or importance, which any orders or individuals of them ſeem to have above others, is entirely his free gift; ſo that, in his eye, none of them will be conſidered as contemptible; their ſphere, rank, or ſtation, amidſt the immenſity of his works, is preciſely what he appointed.

The other conſideration is, that the minuteſt events and effects, the moſt inconſiderable or contemptible beings in our eye, may have uſes, or anſwer ends unknown to us, which give them ſufficient importance in the view of the Supreme Governor; and the many inſtances there have been, even in human experience, of great effects from cauſes ſeemingly inconſiderable, may ſuffice to ſilence us in our judgment with reſpect to them.

But further, *Thirdly*, In anſwer to the objection we are now conſidering, As we readily admit the divine immediate agency in regulating the various motions in the material planetary ſyſtem, and even in that part of the human bodily ſyſtem which is material and has no dependence on the human will, *viz.* the vital functions, without exception of any parts, motions, or functions, as if they were excluded from his

his ſuperintendency, (or from the influence of thoſe natural laws* to which he has made them ſubject, and by which he conducts each of them,) becauſe of their being too minute and inconſiderable; why ſhould we think that any of the operations of beings endued with life, or even ſuch as depend upon the free will of moral agents, ſhould be too inconſiderable to be regarded and regulated by him? And why may we not ſuppoſe that, as in his works of nature, ſo alſo in his works of providence, he has eſtabliſhed certain laws or methods of proceeding, not diſcoverable by us at preſent, nor encroaching on man's natural liberty, but, agreeably to which, certain meaſures of conduct are uniformly and invariably connected with certain conſequences as to happineſs or miſery, either here or hereafter, as naturally as vapours aſcend, or ſtones fall downwards.

Fourthly, Though the ſuppoſition of ſubordinate agents or delegates, to whom God may have committed his providential adminiſtration, aſſigning to each of them their different provinces, although this ſuppoſition cannot be ſaid to derogate from the perfection

* By the courſe of nature, or any law of nature, can only be meant, the uniform way in which the Author of Nature operates, in and by every being, according to the various natures and principles he has given them, and the ends for which he made and preſerves them.

perfection of his nature and government, yet as little does it add thereto, and, inſtead of having any foundation in Scripture, there are rather many intimations therein given, of God's immediate interpoſition and attention to the minuteſt events or effects; which, as we have already ſhown, may not only be ſuppoſed, without any diminution of his dignity, quiet, or happineſs, but muſt neceſſarily be inferred from his being always intimately preſent, in the exerciſe of all his perfections, thro' every part of his works, which ſuperſedes the uſe of ſuch inferior agents; but that, according to their ſeveral natures, capacities and offices, he ſhould employ them in executing his commands, and make them ſubſervient to the great ends of his providential adminiſtration, is highly conſiſtent with his infinite wiſdom and majeſty. By this it will eaſily be ſeen that we do not at all mean any ſuch thing as an *anima mundi** an unintelligent *Plaſtick principle*

* The *mundane ſoul* of Plato, the *plaſtick*, unintelligent, all-pervading principle of Ariſtotle, Cudworth, &c. the *numbers* of Pythagoras, the *atoms* of Democritus, the *vortexes* of Descartes, the *archæus* of Paracelſus, the *occult qualities* of ſome Newtonians, and the *heavenly agents* of the Hutchinſonians, are ſo many different ways of accounting for the operations of nature and providence, without the immediate interpoſition of the Deity. But whoever examines their hypotheſis, will find them to be but words without ideas; and whoever embraces them and is ſatisfied with the light they give, as increaſing his ſtock of knowledge, will find himſelf as much diſappointed as Ixion in the fable, when expecting to embrace *Juno*, he found he had only graſped a *cloud*.

principle, or the like; theſe are words without ideas, conceits without any reaſonor experiment to ſupport them,

IV. It is ſometimes objected againſt providence "That many things in the natural "world ſeem *uſeleſs*, or rather *hurtful* to "man, the principal inhabitant of this "earth, as vaſt deſarts, ſeas, mountains, "&c. and that there are ſometimes *calamitous* operations or phenomena in a pre-"ternatural way, as earthquakes, peſtilences, &c. ſo that theſe objects and events "appear rather *fortuitous*, or, as it were, "the ſport of nature, than the effect of "ſupreme intelligence, preſiding over and "directing them."

This objection is alſo founded on the ſame miſtake of ſuppoſing that we are able to judge of the operations of infinite wiſdom: It would, I may ſay, be an argument againſt God's over-ruling all things by his providence, if his ways and ends in it were always manifeſt to us, and the concealment of them anſwers one great end which he has in view, *viz.* the trial of our faith, patience, truſt, and ſubmiſſion to his will, even in caſes that to us appear dark or adverſe: Did we clearly ſee them not to be adverſe, where would be the trial by them? or did we clearly ſee in them, judgment irrevocable, it behoved to throw us into deſpair.

It

It might however be a mean of ſilencing us, in our judgment of any of his works as uſeleſs, that many of them, which were long conſidered as being ſo, or at leaſt, whoſe uſes were long unknown, came to be found of great uſefulneſs for the accommodation of life; ſuch as the vaſt tracts of ſea, now made ſubſervient to the purpoſes of commerce and mutual intercourſe of nations: from which alſo vapours are exhaled by the ſolar heat, and formed into clouds that are driven by the winds, and rained down afterward upon the earth in fructifying ſhowers. Again, the vaſt ridges of mountains complained of, are found to have their uſefulneſs in collecting the vapours we juſt now mentioned, forming reſervoirs of water, that burſt out in ſprings and rivers, and affording ſhelter to the countries adjacent to them. Tempeſts have their uſe, for purifying the air, and ſo of other natural or preternatural phenomena, which have their uſefulneſs, in different ways, either of mercy or of judgment, with reſpect to man.

If it be aſked, Why is all this apparatus neceſſary for man, for his health, ſhelter, intercourſe, comfort or chaſtiſement? Why is man ſo conſtituted as to need all this? It may as well be aſked, Why was he made a man? Why not an angel? Why was he made to walk? Why not to fly? All this muſt

muſt be reſolved into the depths of divine wiſdom. From the diſcoveries that have been made of valuable ends, anſwered by many objects formerly thought uſeleſs, we may learn to pronounce none to be of them, merely becauſe we are, as yet, ignorant of the end it does or may anſwer: Thus much indeed may be obſerved, as to the methods of providence, in bringing about diſcoveries with reſpect to this, that, tho' they would have been uſeful to mankind from the beginning, yet they were not then afforded, but brought gradually and ſlowly to light, in ſuch a manner as to exerciſe human induſtry and invention in producing them; and, for the ſame reaſon, we may ſuppoſe there are more of them, in reſerve for after-ages, as important and aſtoniſhing as the invention of letters, the mariner's compaſs, the air-pump, teleſcopes, microſcopes, gunpowder, printing, or any other diſcoveries in the ages that are paſt,

Again, as to the calamitous appearances or operations mentioned, earthquakes, peſtilences, &c. though the aſſigning their *natural cauſes* be not enough to reconcile us to them, yet the *moral cauſes* or ends that may be aſſigned for them, in the way of intimating the divine diſpleaſure againſt nations or cities, ſunk in vice and wickedneſs, are rather arguments for a providence than againſt it.

But

But here, may ſome ſay, might it not be expected that the virtuous and innocent ſhould be diſtinguiſhed, and eximed from the common calamity? This leads to conſider the

V. And laſt objection we ſhall mention that is often urged againſt providence, *viz. There being, in this life, ſo little diſtinction made between the innocent and the guilty, the virtuous and the vicious*; "Is there not,) will "ſome ſay,) one event to them both, a lia- "bleneſs to the ſame calamities and di- "ſtreſſes? Nay, is it not remarkable, that the "wicked proſper moſt, and ſeem to be the "favourites of providence, while the pious "and virtuous are diſtinguiſhed rather by "their ſufferings? Does not this, ſay they, "prove, that there is no interpoſition of "providence? or, which is worſe than de- "nying it, that its operations are inconſiſt- "ent with juſtice and goodneſs?"

Was it only in the common courſe of converſation, that we ſometimes heard reaſonings of this kind, we ſhould be apt to think that it was only for argument's ſake, or to enliven diſcourſe; but when we look at the writings of ſome, who are diſtinguiſhed by the public voice in their favour, particularly Mr Voltaire, and, beſides other whimſical pieces of his, obſerve, even in his hiſtories, reflections interſperſed to the above purpoſe, tending to weaken our belief

of the interpoſition of providence in human affairs, I muſt ſuppoſe it ariſes from a firm belief of what is thus inſinuated or aſſerted.

This lively and moſt entertaining hiſtorian often ſpeaks of *chance*, but how does he define it? in a way which, one would think, implies a contradiction in terms, and might be reckoned almoſt as good a definition of *fate*, as of *fortune* or chance: It is, ſays he, a *fortuitous concatenation of the varions events of the univerſe*.

But, without taking any further notice of particular opponents in this argument, let us conſider the argument or objection itſelf, and how far it may avail to diſprove a providence.

Firſt, Then, we may in part deny the truth of the fact on which the objection is built, *viz.* 'That, in God's providential adminiſtration, there is never any diſtinction 'made between the righteous and the wicked, or that the latter generally proſper moſt.' That there are many inſtances, of good men's ſuffering much in this life, cannot and need not be denied: There is room enough left for vindicating providence, though this ſhould be admitted: Nor can I join the learned and pious Dr Scot, in going ſo far to queſtion the characters of many, who may be thus remarkable for their ſufferings, as if they were not in reality what they appeared to be; of this we ſhould judge very tenderly

tenderly and cautiouſly; but it muſt indeed be owned, that there is not a man upon earth ſo righteous, or ſo far conformed to the will of God, but there is much to reform or rectify about him; ſo far therefore as ſufferings are neceſſary, and made, in any meaſure, effectual for this purpoſe, of promoting a man's ſpiritual or mental improvement, they are to be conſidered as a diſtinguiſhing mark of God's favour for him, and the more he would have this favour teſtified to him, the more may he lay his account with ſuch trial or correction as is neceſſary for the end now mentioned; even as a child may expect correction, from a wiſe and dutiful parent, for many things, which ſeem, for the time, to be overlooked by him in others.

We muſt therefore take the improvement of the righteous man into the account, as well as his ſufferings, before we can determine as to the favour of providence with reſpect to him. And, in like manner, as to thoſe who appear to flouriſh or proſper outwardly; is it, on this account alone, that we are to pronounce them wicked? this indeed would be the judgment of envy with reſpect to them, and from its judgment, poſſibly, may ariſe, ſome of the complaints that are ſo common, on account of the outward favour of providence to many who ſeem to be more remarkable for their induſtry

induſtry than for their integrity, and yet appear to be the moſt flouriſhing and ſucceſsful in this world.

But, would we judge fairly here likewiſe, we muſt take into the account, not only their proſperity, but alſo their improvement of it, before we can determine as to their real character; only, thus far it may be ſaid, that, generally ſpeaking, there is more reaſon to be ſuſpicious of them on two accounts;

One is, that the ſuperior proſperity or ſucceſs of many ariſes, not only from ſuperior induſtry and prudence, which Providence remarkably favours, but alſo from their going greater lengths for promoting it than others, even at the expence of their integrity and innocence; no wonder therefore if they ſhould acquire what a good man would diſdain on theſe terms, and if, conſequently, the former ſhould ſeem to flouriſh and the latter to decay: So that the outward favour of Providence to ſome, in the ſucceſs of their wicked courſes, is no mark of approbation, encouraging us to emulate and imitate them in any thing but that induſtry and foreſight formerly mentioned; for, it is not God's will, in the way of his Providence, thus outwardly favouring, that is given us for the rule of our conduct, but the will of his precepts, intimated to us by our own reaſon and conſcience, and the ſupernatural

pernatural revelation he has given us. The ſame may be alſo ſaid in another ſenſe, that it is not from the will of God's Providence with reſpect to futurity, as apprehended or conjectured by us, that we are to take our meaſures of conduct, but to uſe theſe means that appear agreeable to the rules now mentioned, and to truſt in him for their events and ſucceſs.

Another reaſon for being more ſuſpicious of the proſperous man's character is, that proſperity is generally found more dangerous to virtue than adverſity, as it draws after it many temptations, furniſhes incentives to, and gratifications of many corrupt deſires, and often baniſhes all ſerious thought and reflection. From all this, however, we would not have it concluded, whatever grounds of ſuſpicion there may be, either as to guilty cauſes or corrupt effects of outward proſperity and ſucceſs; from this, I ſay, we would not have it concluded, that the conſideration of outward circumſtances alone, be they ever ſo favourable, is ſufficient to determine as to the characters of men, unleſs their conduct in and improvement of them be likewiſe taken into the account, and, from the whole we may conclude, that the truth of the fact, *viz.* "The "wicked's flouriſhing in the world more "than the righteous," is what we cannot warrantably determine or aſcertain. But

Secondly, Inſtead of admitting, that the wicked proſper in this life more than the righteous, I might undertake to prove the contrary, *viz.* that the righteous proſper moſt; that is, if proſperity be eſtimated according to the degree of their happineſs. If, indeed, we eſtimate proſperity according to outward circumſtances and acquiſitions, it cannot be denied but the wicked may have a large ſhare of them; but may they not have much miſery, ſecret anguiſh, and ſelf-condemnation alongſt with them? may they not be the means of foſtering many guilty paſſions that break their reſt or peace of mind, mar their ſelf-enjoyment, and thereby deſtroy what conſtitutes real proſperity and ſolid happineſs, even in the preſent life.

On the other hand, let the good man's outward ſtraits and ſufferings be what they will, his *happineſs* or *real proſperity* may juſtly be ſaid, even here, to be ſuperior; he places his happineſs in the divine favour and approbation, and, while the ſenſe of this in any meaſure prevails, or is diffuſed into his ſoul, there is no compariſon betwixt even his preſent happineſs and that of the wicked, who is a ſtranger to God and inward happineſs, or mental enjoyment, even when his outward ſtate appears moſt happy and proſperous.

3. *Laſtly*,

3. *Laſtly*, was the diſparity ſtill greater, in the diſtributions of Providence to the righteous and the wicked in this life; What does it prove? but that this is not the whole of our being; that there is another ſtate to ſucceed this, in which theſe diſtributions ſhall not only be made agreeably to infinite juſtice and goodneſs, but likewiſe appear or be manifeſted as ſuch; that the ways of Providence, as correſponding with the Divine perfections, may be fully and finally vindicated.

Even a few inſtances of good men's ſuffering here, in conformity and ſubmiſſion to the will of God, or of their ſeeming to be overlooked by Providence, are enough to prove the certainty of a future ſtate of retribution, and even a few inſtances of the remarkable interpoſition of Providence, for rewarding the righteous and puniſhing the wicked, in this life; even a few inſtances of this, I ſay, are enough to prove ſuch a ſuperior attention to human concerns at preſent; were there many inſtances of it, the great argument for a future ſtate of retribution would be the more weakened; if miracles were often wrought, for diſtinguiſhing between the righteous and wicked here, the exerciſe of induſtry and foreſight would be, in a great meaſure, ſuperſeded; and, without miracles, ſuch a diſtinction could not, in many caſes, be made; Upon

the

the whole, by its not being made here, we are taught to look assuredly for its being made hereafter, when the wonderful œconomy of Providence shall be compleated, and shall appear subservient to the greatest general good.

ERRATA.

VOLUME I.

page.	*line.*	
3.	8.	For *health* read *life*, and for *likeways* read *likewise*,
15.	26.	For *has* read *have*.
40.	25.	For *abour* read *labour*.
88.	17.	For *grips* read *gripe*.
132.	33.	For *men* read *man*.
190.	1.	For *shrewed* read *shrewd*.
191.	26.	For *being, in some measure, attentive to his*, read *his being, in some measure, attentive to it*.
276.	5.	For *none to be of them*, read *none of them to be so*.

End of the first Volume.